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Some Choice, Select

MEDITATIONS

ON

- I. The Nature of the G O S P E L.
- II. The Necessity and Advantages of F A I T H.
- III. The Gospel-privilege of J U S T I F I C A T I O N, with further Observations upon the same Subject.

AS ALSO

Upon E F F E C T U A L C A L L I N G;



The Difference between MORAL and SAVING GRACE, distinctly handled

By the late Reverend and Learned, Mr. James Fraser
of Brea, Minister of the Gospel at Culross.

Faithfully printed from the original Manuscript, never
heretofore published.

Psal. xxv. 14. *The Secret of the Lord is with them
that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant,*

✓ Edinburgh, Printed in the Year MDCCXXVI

To the Reader

THE following Meditations, containing certain precious and most encouraging Gospel-discoveries; need no other Recommendation for thy serious Perusal of them, than the comfortable Light they hold forth to thee, for preparing thy Way, and casting up the Highway, Isa. lxii. 10. If thy Exercise be, how thou may come at the Lord Jesus, as the great Salvation of God to Mankind lost; or if Satan and Unbelief dispute thy Right and Title to Christ: Herein, thou shalt find these Stones and Stumbling-blocks satisfyingly shovelled out of thy Way. Moreover, the Light they hold forth, being so uncommon, and so lamentably darkened and vail'd in this declining Day, wherein it is said, Lo, here is Christ, Lo there: Again the Light herein is so profitable and instructing, especially to exercised Souls travelling in the Dark, tossed with the Fears, Doubts and Jealousies of Unbelief anent their Claim and Title to Christ, or their personal Interest in him; and likewise, most convincingly answering and silencing some of the main and strongest Objections usually thrown up by the grand Enemy against the same. It was judg'd, that as the concealing of so valuable a Treatise, would be a singular Loss: So the Publication hereof would be of singular Use to many, namely, to convinced Souls in Quest of the Lord Jesus as the End of the Law for Righteousness to them that believe. Lastly, These Discoveries being the Meditations of a Scribe so eminently instructed for the Kingdom of Heaven, an Interpreter, one among a thousand, who being dead, yet speaketh, Heb. xi. 4. may justly challenge their due Room in thy Esteem.

Note, That there occurs only a few scholastick Terms therein, not so obvious to the vulgar Reader; which he may pass by, without any Loss or Prejudice to the Purposes treated therein.



MEDITATION

O N

i Tim. Chap. i. 15.

This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, That Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners, of whom I am Chief.

WE have spoken of the Law. Next follows the Gospel, which is summarily comprehended in this most precious Sentence, *Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners.* And that you may the better understand it, ye may consider These few things which flow from it.

1st, Man is a miserable undone Creature naturally ; for otherwise, what Need of a Saviour to save, if not destroyed and perished ? *Hos. xiii. 9.* Destroyed and miserable, both in respect of Sin, which is the greatest Evil, with which Man is polluted throughly, in which he is dead, and by which every Thing he doth is most abominable unto God, and by which himself is a loth-som, hateful and cruel Enemy unto God, *Rom. viii. 7. Eph. ii. 1. Prov. xv. 8. and xxi. 27. Hag. ii. 14.* and likewise in respect of the Consequents of Sin ; which are, his being forsaken of God, his Delivery unto Satan, and his Slavery unto him, and his own Lusts, and the fearful Sentence of Condemnation to be execute upon him, as soon as ever he dieth, *Eph. ii. 12.* which Point, may make every natural Man tremble, and fear

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exceed-

exceedingly, and cry out, What shall we do? and run unto their City of Refuge.

2dly, This miserable Condition is very sad; it is not only a miserable Condition, but a very miserable Condition: Here was the saddest and deepest Pit, Man could fall into. No Misery that could befall thee, O Man! is comparable unto thy spiritual Misery, by reason of Sin. To be under the Power of Sin, is worse than to be tormented in Hell. The saddest Word Christ ever spake, was this, *Ye shall die in your Sins*: It is so in God's Account, that judges righteously and according to Truth. The Cry of thy woful Condition was so sad, as it brought Christ out of Heaven to preach, to be humbled, and to die for Sinners; and he came not to heal sore Fingers, and doth not concern himself in Trifles. The greatest Token of Love Christ can or will kyth unto thee, is to deliver thee from thy Sins. And this will, and doth make the Saints bleſs him through all Eternity, and never rests: Every Saint is as much obliged to Christ, as tho' Christ came and took him out of Hell, and brought him to Heaven.

3dly, Man is not able to deliver himself, or Man's Salvation is not in himself; it's Christ came to save Sinners, *Rom. v. 6. When yet without Strength, Christ died for the Ungodly*; no more than a dead Man can live of himself, he cannot quicken himself, he cannot change his Nature, he cannot break open his Prison-doors, he can do nothing that may merit this, but daily Sin, and rot in his Prison. The Father must draw, *Jam. i. 18. Of his own will begat he us*. Despair then of your selves, and seek not the Living among the Dead; seek not to mount up to Heaven, with your Clay-legs; mourn and lament under thy Disability, not only because thou art miserable; but because thou canst not come out of thy Misery, no more than ye can pull the Sun out of the Firmament. Ascribe not any Good thou dost, or hast gotten, unto thy self, in whom dwelleth no Good at all. Seek not then to plow on Rocks, or to wash the *Ethiopian*; beware

ware of trusting to thy Duties, for thy Help is not in them: Use them, but trust not to them.

4thly, Be not much astonished or discouraged, tho' thou find not Help in thy self, or in any Mean under Heaven: For here thou wast not to expect to have it. A Man is not to wonder, if he look to the West, that the Sun rises not there to him, Why? He is to look to the East, where it is appointed only to rise. Ye look unto the wrong Airth, Sirs, that look to your selves. Good may come, tho' not from this Airth: Help there is, tho' not in thee.

5thly, There is Help and Salvation for Man; the Revelation of a Saviour tells, there is Salvation: Man, tho' as to himself most desperate; yet, not as to another. God can help the Devils, but he will not, and therefore there is no Help in God for them; and therefore their Condition is most desperate; and there is no Hope for them. (1.) The most miserable and most desperate Sinner that now is under the Drop of the Gospel may hope: Lift up your Heads, let this reprove your sinking Despair, that concludes there is no Hope; nothing ye can meet with here, can assure you of this, *No Man knoweth Love or Hatred by any Thing that is before him*; there is Hope in the worst Case: And to say, I am a Reprobate, till you feel your selves in Hell, is an ungrounded Conclusion, and unwarrantable; and when the Devil draws this Conclusion from either the Greatness, or Multitude, Hainousness, and Continuance of your Sins, or from the vilest Frame of your Hearts, or from the saddest Providences, he plays but the Sophist. (2.) Hope at least; if ye cannot believe, keep your Heads above Water. (3.) Bless the Lord, that hath given you this *Valley of Achor for a Door of Hope*, and hath not shut thee up with damned Reprobates and Devils in Hell; but hath kept thee in the Land of the Living: For of a living Man there is Hope. *Lastly*, Let this encourage to go about and continue waiting on in the Use of Means, notwithstanding of all Discouragements, *Who knoweth but the*

the Lord may be gracious? Joel ii. 12, 13. Prov. viii. 34.

6thly, Sinner, and lost undone Creature, Help is in Christ Jesus: Christ came to save Sinners. It is neither in thy self, nor in Means, nor in Angels, nor in Saints, nor in God simply: But it is in Jesus Christ the Mediator, in God as in a Redeemer. 1. Hence learn to love, admire and long after this your Saviour. No Man's Name is sweeter to the sick Man, than the Physician: O then, let no Name be sweeter, or more comfortable unto thee, than the Name of Jesus; let no Discourse relish but of this; let nothing be sweet but what smells and tastes of him; cry out for this, as for thy Life: He is thy only Upmaker; now without him thou art more miserable and vile than a Devil. 2. O come and cast your Eyes with me upon him; Who is this that cometh forth out of *Bethra*? Who is this Saviour? Oh come and cast thine Eyes upon him, and see what Manner of Person and Saviour he is (1.) He is a noble Helper and Saviour, he is the Stem of *Jesse*, and the Plant of Renown; he is the only Begotten of the Father, Prince of the Kings of the Earth, and is far above Angels, and Principalities and Powers; he thought it no Robbery to be equal with God: Never such a Saviour was seen; tho' he had not the Relation of an Helper and Saviour, yet himself were worthy of Esteem. (2.) He is a mighty Saviour, a great Saviour; his Salvation is not a small Matter: No, no, to redeem from Sin, from the Devil, from the Law, from the World, from the Justice of God, and Wrath to come, which must be born, and yet is insupportable. The mighty Lord hath done great Things for me: Oh, the Salvation of a poor Sinner is a might work, and a Token of the greatest Love; he doth not save from petty Evils, oh no; but from unspeakable Evils, even eternal and inconceivable Misery; no Saviour can give you such a Redemption as this: Tho' thou gain the whole World, and miss this, thou art but an undone Soul, and this will abundantly recompense the Loss of all unto thee. (3.) He is a most loving Saviour, he delights

delights in Loving-kindness, all *his Chariot is pav'd with Love*; he preached, died, suffered, convinced thee and afflicted thee, out of Love: No Love to the Love of Christ, there is no speaking of it; O the tender Heart of Christ! (4.) He is a most wise, skilful Saviour: He hath the right Art and Method of it. It would puzzle and confound all the Wit of Heaven and Earth to guide a poor Sinner, they would not know how to begin. *In him are hid the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge* (5.) He is a lovely Saviour, not only a loving, but a lovely Saviour; O for a Sight of his drawing Beauty! it would lead thee captive for ever: Never such a fair One seen, as Christ; when he courts a Sinner, there is no Resistance of him; all the drawing Beauty of the World, is but Deformity in respect of him. I would seek no other Heaven than to be looking through a Chink of the Wall of the *New Jerusalem* to this Fairest. (6.) He is a compleat al-fufficient Saviour; he is all their Salvation, Light, Life, Holiness, Freedom from the Law, Favour with God, all is in him; whatever a lost Sinner wants, is in him. (7.) He is the only Saviour, there is no Saviour besides him, not any Deliverer but he; all is ingrossed in him. 8. He is an everlasting Saviour, evermore able to help, evermore ready, willing to save, and the Sinner stands always in need of him; when without Strength and Life, to begin Life; when begun, to preserve it; and when fail'd, to restore it again; when assaulted, to underprop it. (9.) He is Salvation it self; Ay, and note this well, he is not only the efficient Cause of your Salvation, but he is the formal Cause; he not only gives Life, Light, Strength and Consolation; but he is thy Life, thy Light, thy Righteousness, thy Redemption; *He is made of God unto us, Wisdom, &c.* 1 Cor. i. 30. (10.) He is a near Salvation, *a present Help in Trouble*; We need not go into Heaven, or to Hell to fetch Christ down, or from above; no, he is near us: How so, he is in his Word, which is in our Mouths, and in our Hearts; so that any Promise, Light or Life the Word gives, it is Christ

Christ that gives it; and entertain it, ye entertain Christ. (11.) He is a most lowly and humble Saviour, *Mat. xi. 28. I am meek and lowly*; ye may make very bold with him, he is not lordly; Access ye may have, when ye will, none ever was so condescending as He: Oh therefore, come unto him, seek him, and cry unto him in this thy Day, while he is going by; wait upon him in Means and Ordinances, till thou see and find, and get him, and then keep.

6thly, Christ doth not engross, or keep up what is in himself, or to himself; but opens and proclaims it: He is not a Fountain sealed or inclosed, but an opened Fountain; He hath Life; but not for himself, but for others, *Gifts for the Rebellious. John xvii. For their Sakes do I sanctify my self.* (1.) He deals in behalf of others: He died not for his own Sins; all the World was in him, by one Man all are made alive, as in one all Men perished; he is a publick Person, and therefore called *the the Covenant of the people.* (2.) The Names given him in Scripture shows this. I know, in Respect of God's Decree, a few only are appointed to receive Benefit by him; and so was the City of Refuge too, appointed for all, tho' secretly intended for the Benefit of some only, and hence is called a *Way*, in which every Man may walk; a *Fountain*, out of which every Man may drink, appointed for the general Good; therefore look not on this Salvation, that is in Christ, as a Thing in which ye are not concerned; but look on it as appointed for thee. *In him was Life, but this Life was the Light of Men*; and that made of God so unto thee. (3.) Christ hath a publick Relation of a *Physician* and *Saviour*; and who have Access unto him then, but sick, lost, undone Sinners? (4.) Christ declares, promises, gives this to these who hear it; he deals very ingenuously: As he did not any Thing for himself; so he declares for whose Sake it is: *Gifts for the Rebellious*, He came to save Sinners; and by this his Declaration tells to whom it is. (5.) All are commanded to come and take this as *their own*, Oh, then, here is Matter of Comfort, that

not only Help is in Christ, but your Help; Yours, in respect of Appointment, and Work of Christ; Yours, in respect of the Promise of Christ, giving it freely to you. A Man is to judge himself, not by what he finds in himself, but by what he finds in Christ, who is Man's *Surety* and *Righteousness*. Oh come to him, seek from him, from this your kind Friend, who is no Stranger to you, but wonderfully related unto you; and meddle boldly with that which is your own. *Who-soever will, let him come, and take of the Water of Life*: Stand not a-back, as from a Stranger, with whom ye have nothing ado; Christ hath ado with you, he came to save Sinners. (7.) Altho' Christ came to save Mankind (*he took not on him the Nature of Angels*) yet is he not a Saviour to Man as Man is righteous and happy; but as a Man is sinful, miserable and undone: *I came not to call the Righteous; The Whole need not a Physician*. It's not therefore to Angels, that he is a Saviour, nor yet to Man simply, nor to Man as happy, nor as righteous, nor yet to Man as elected; for the Gospel-declaration meddles nothing with this. As a Physician is a relative Term, and its Correlate formal, is not Health; so the Notion of a Saviour is not an absolute Term, but a relative Term, and presupposes and looks unto, not Happiness. Oh then here is Matter of Sorrow to these that see any Good in themselves, and will not, cannot conclude themselves Enemies, Slaves, lost, undone, vile; but will maintain that your Hearts are good, and the Devil ye hope is not in you. Oh, I tell you, if you see and look to your selves as whole, ye have nothing ado with this Physician; if as free, and not in Bondage, look not on Christ as a Saviour; if as clean, look not on this Fountain: Nay, Christ's Office is to *blind* you, *John ix. 39*. And that which is appointed for Life unto others, thou shalt find to be Death unto thee. He pulleth the Mighty from their Seats: Oh we cannot declare this Saviour unto you. Hence see what's the Reason that Christ is such a Stranger unto many: Oh here it is, they see not their Misery, not because they feel

it not, but they see it not, and therefore feel it not. It's your Good that undoes you; *The Rich are sent empty away*. Seek not then something in thy self to bring unto the Lord Jesus; for, by this Means, thou but makes thy self less related: If thou couldst bring a broken Heart and Holiness to Christ, he would say, Now are ye not for me, thou shouldst be sent away empty, *Luke i. 53. 1 Sam. ii. 4, 5.* (8.) The Relation Christ as a Saviour hath to Mankind, is as fallen, lost, undone, and sinful. Jesus Christ came to save Sinners: The seeing of their self as a Sinner is that which gives yon Claim and Interest in Christ; and when thou looks upon thy self under any other Relation, thou art a Stranger unto Christ. Christ came to call Sinners to Repentance, not the Righteous. If ye look upon Christ as a Rewarder of every one, according to Man's Work, as he will be at the last Day; then none hath Interest in him but righteous Persons: But look on Christ as a promised Saviour, as a Light to the Blind, as the Life of the World; then it's only Sinners, dead undone Persons, that have ado with him. (1.) This is the formal Cause of returning, *Hos. xiv. 1. Return, because thou hast fallen. Rev. iii. 18. Buy, because miserable and naked.* (2.) Christ is not a Saviour and a Physician to the Whole and Sound, *Mat. ix. 12, 13.* (3.) Saints have made this the Ground of their Faith and Prayers. *Forgive, for it is a stiff-necked People; give me Crumbs, because a Dog.* (4.) Because the Notion of a Saviour, Light, Physician, Health, Life, are relative Terms, and have Relation and Reference to Men as Correlates to these Relations, and therefore to Men as miserable, blind, sick and dead. (5.) The Gospel Promises are to such, and as such, *Rom. iv. 5. He justifies the Ungodly. Rom. v. 6. He died for the Ungodly. He delivers the Bound. Isa. lxi. 3. He reconciles Enemies:* For the free Gift by Promise, is either to Man as believing, knowing, regenerated: and these are saved already, and so a promise should be of such Things as they have already: For all Promises must be to such as want it, and as they want it.

Obj.

Obj. 1st. It is neither to Sinners absolutely, nor as righteous, but as elect Sinners. *I answer* then, The Meaning of this Text must be, Christ came to save Sinners, *i. e.* Christ came to save elect Sinners; but this can be no better Ground of believing, then to say Christ hath elected some to Glory: *Ergo*, Believe and accept this. Where was ever Election made a Ground of believing? But the Gospel Declaration hath nothing ado with Election this being secret. All are commanded to believe; The ground therefore of this Command, *viz.* Christ came to save Sinners, must be as large as the Persons called.

Obj. 2d. If the Promises belong to Sinners as Sinners, then should they belong to all Sinners, and Christ should be a Saviour to all Sinners. *I answer*, And so he is, and he came to save all Sinners; and all Sinners, having this joyful Sound, have a Right unto Christ.

1st Instance, Then should all be saved; For all those Christ came to save, are saved. I deny the Consequence; because Christ came not with an Intention to save all. As to its Probation, (*or, for proof of this*) we must distinguish (as I said elsewhere) betwixt the End of Christ in coming; and betwixt the End of the Coming of Christ: Betwixt the End of the Work; and the End of the Worker. The End of Christ's Coming, as it's his Work, is, that all may be saved; but the End of Christ himself in coming, is only that some few be saved: Hence, tho' the End of Christ's Coming, as it signifies the Intention of the Comer, be that all be not saved, but only the Elect; yet the End of Christ's Coming, as it is a Work, is that all be saved; and, in this Respect, Christ may be said to be the Saviour of all Men, by giving to all a legal Title, *1 Tim. iv. 10.* hence called the common Salvation, *Jude v. 3.* I will explain it thus by a parallel Scripture, *1 Kings 20. 42.* *Achab* is said to let go a Man whom God appointed to Destruction. Do not now say, All that God appoints to Destruction, shall be destroyed, that is true by his intentional Decree; but not by his legal Destination, which respects the Use and End of the Object. And

so Jer. xiii. 11. *'I have appointed this People to be a Praise and a Name unto me, but they heard not.* Nor is it necessary tho' Christ be a Saviour unto all, (and so all within the visible Church have Claim to him, and Right in him) that he actually save all: It is sufficient, that all have Right in him. The Acts proceeding from a Relation may be suspended; when yet the Relation stands. Christ may be said to be a Saviour of all, tho' he do not save all: For Acts proceed from the Relation, and not the Relation from Acts.

Instance 2. If Christ by his Office be a Saviour to all Men, and so have Relation to them; he is bound to perform the Acts of that Relation; *Ergo* He is bound to save all. *I answer*, and so he is, supposing that all come to him, receive him, resist him not: And if they come not to him, he is not bound. A Man that is bound to deliver a thousand Pound to his Neighbour by Bond; If his neighbour refuse the Money, and will not at all take it, nay, cannot abide to see his Debitor; no Obligation can tie this Man to make him take, or deliver it to him. What Christ is bound to do, he declares, offers, and gives, and lays at the Sinner's Door, invites him to take, and not to despise his own Mercies: But the Sinner will not give Christ a Look, will not come to him; and when Christ comes to him to heal him, and bestow his own upon him; the Sinner refuses. *We would have healed Babylon, but she would not*; therefore the Fault was in *Babylon*, not in God.

Inst. 3. Christ is bound to give Faith, for otherwise he is not a perfect Saviour; and to take away the Resistance: Therefore Christ fails, if he make not the Soul willing. *I answer*, Christ is bound only to give what he offers, which is himself and all his Benefits. And the Command is not, what Right I have to Faith; nor doth Christ offer Faith to be received: But offers Peace, Pardon, and Remission of Sins to be received by Faith: and Christ's Promises in the Gospel, are not Prophecies of what will come eventually, no more than his Threatnings; but what is legally, which yet the Sinner may prevent: And look as Repentance, or the
King's

King's Will, may not execute a peremptory Threatning; but may stop it: Even so, may Unbelief and Wilfulness stop the Execution of an absolute and peremptory Promise: By which Means the Lord may in Justice *make Men know the Breach of his Promise*, as is abundantly clear from *Ezek. xxxiii. 8. Isa. vii. 8, 9. 1 Sam. ii. 30. Deut. xxviii. 68.* So then the Right is absolute; But the Possession of the Thing, and the Fruition of the Benefit of the Promise, is conditional: Therefore these Promises give a Right to the Sinner to lay hold on the Thing promised.

Obj. 3d, Promises are to Piety and Godliness. *Godliness is great Gain*, &c. *Tim. iv. 8. Ergo*, not to Sinners as Sinners. *I answer*, Godliness hath the Promises of this Life and that which is to come, in actual Possession, true: In Right and remote Title, it is false; For so, they are to Sinners as Sinners; especially, the first Promises of Life, Light, and Faith, which is not to the Righteous: Faith being the Mean by which we are possessed of that to which we had a Right before, by the Gospel free Gift.

Here is then Matter of marvellous Consolation to poor, undone, blind Sinners, that this is the very Account upon which Christ hath ado with them: Ye say ye have no Claim, nor Right to Christ; why so? Oh I am not humbled, broken, neither holy, nor Mourner. Oh but art thou a Sinner? Oh yes, then remember upon this Account, ye have an interest in Christ*, and therefore to receive him as your own; this gives you Ground to meddle with and take him: Remember *he came to call Sinners to Repentance*: A Sinner and a Saviour are not Strangers, they have some Sibness and Relation; nay, it is to them only that Christ as a Saviour is related.

Obj. 1mo. Oh but I want Repentance and Brokenness of Heart. *Answer*, Oh but he is exalted to give Repentance, and to call Sinners to Repentance.

Obj.

* i. e. *Hereby you have a Right to claim Interest in Christ as a Saviour.*

Obj. 2d. But my Sins are very great. *Ans.* Yet David prayed, *Psal. xxv. Forgive my Iniquity, because great* : Great Sinners are not excluded. *1st Inst.* But I have long continued in Sin: *Ans.* Then turn at last, He is an everlasting Saviour ; This Relation stands always. *Inst. 2.* But I cannot believe. *Ans.* He is the Saviour to help thee to believe. This very Word Christ came to save Sinners, will yield thee perpetual Consolation and Encouragement to believe, and will underprop thy Faith. Through him is Remission of Sins preached ! To whom ? To Unbelievers, to these who want it. The Gospel hath joined Christ and Sinners together as two Relations. O then be not separate from him, Oh look to him, come to him, cry to him, depend on him, receive him, and in receiving believe the Remission of your Sins : Believe first your interest in general, till thou lay hold on this blessed Covenant, and then believe in particular.

9. Sinners, in their Approach and Uptaking of Christ, would look on God in Christ, or on Christ as all Mercy, all Love, only a Saviour, and see no Fury or Wrath in him at all. Christ revealed in the Gospel is only Love : He came to save, not to condemn ; This was his only Business. *Isa. xxvii. 4. Fury is not in me, John iii. 17. God sent not his Son to condemn the World ;* he hath nothing ado as a Judge now, nor as a Lawgiver ; *This came by Moses, John i. 17. and Grace only by Jesus Christ. The Son of Man came not to kill, but to save ; not to be honoured, but to serve. I judge no Man,* saith Christ *He gives liberally and upbraideth not. He will not strive nor contend.* There is nothing in Christ's Mouth, but Peace and Reconciliation, nothing but Love altogether, no Judgment, no Law, no Wrath, no Upbraiding. He came to take away Sin, and therefore not to leave to die in Sin, or to punish for Sin. Oh me thinks this should make Christ exceeding lovely, there is not one Frown in all his Countenance, as the Gospel holds him out to us ; There is nothing in Christ that may terrify or affright, all are for the Sinner's Advantage. And may not, (2.) this be a Ground
of

strong Consolation and Faith? Can Heat be expected from a Thing that is altogether cold, or Cold from the Fire? Can Love, and only Love, hate you? Can Meekness chide, be angry? Fury is not in me: Can he that came to save and came only to save from Sin? Can he leave in Sin? (3.) Why are ye discouraged then because of Sin and Unworthiness? what makes you afraid of Christ, or doubt? If in Christ there be neither Wrath, Law, Judgment, or Sharpness are ye feard to be cast off for Sin? Oh Christ is not come to hold Courts, or to judge; *I judge no Man*; Christ hath nothing ado with the Law, *This came by Moses, I am not come to judge or condemn*. Oh but he may be angry: I have no Anger at all, saith Christ, In me, nor no Fury; my only Business is to put Wrath away, and Transgressions, and to give my Life for Sinners; these that expect any other from me, they are deceived, it's the Scepter only that is holden forth now. and is it not unreasonable to think of, or look on him as the Executioner, who is come down with a Pardon for us, or to look on the Advocate as the Judge? Indeed if Christ came with Law, as he will come at the last Day, then indeed ye might expect a Sentence; and be afraid, and come trembling before him, and might look for no Mercy; but coming without the Law, and with Grace and Mercy and tender Compassion, ye can expect no Wrath, nor Justice: As it is contrair to Justice to save the Guilty; so it is contrair to Mercy to punish; and therefore ye may as confidently believe and expect Good from Christ, as ye may expect Refreshment and Cooling from a Draught of Water, or Heat from the Fire: For as its Use, Appointment and Destination is to give Heat, and not Cold; so Christ's Use and Commission and End is to give and shew Mercy, and not Judgment: And therefore come not to Christ to get a Sentence of Law; but come to get a Sentence of Grace; this being proper to him to give: For he is the Saviour of Sinners, and therefore not their Executioner.

10thly,

10thly, The Foundation and Ground of Believing, and Comfort and Hope is without a Man, in Christ only. Man's Security for Heaven, is penned by the Lord himself, and is noways in Man. This Saying, *Christ came to save Sinners, is worthy of Acceptation*, and is our only Hope. Be not discouraged at the first, tho' ye see nothing but Deadness in your selves, and Vileness, for this neither mends nor mars your Interest in Christ: Your Joy, Hope, Delight, Confidence is fixed purely, solely and only upon Christ from without you; and therefore as it depends upon nothing in your selves; so nothing in you can be prejudicial to it, or give you Ground to fail or sink: And therefore all Objections drawn from your own Unworthiness, Deadness, Blindness, Vileness, Sinfulness, are all nothing to the Purpose at all: For the Question now is not, whether I have Grace or not in me? But, whether I may hope, believe and expect any Thing? The Lord is the Confidence of all the Ends of the Earth, and therefore, *Look to him and be saved.*

The Question is, Whether Christ's Willingness, good Nature, Office, and Power, and Relation, be not enough to build on? And what I am to expect from this Airth? When therefore ye doubt of your Interest in Christ, and when Satan saith, Thou cannot make him thine; ye must look on the Lord's free Gift, and say, This is it that intituled me to Christ. When Satan or thy own unbelieving Heart saith, Tho' Christ came to save Sinners; yet not all Sinners: Say, This is but to say, Christ gives no good Ground of Hope, and to find Nullities in his Charter. When it is objected and said, Ye cannot believe; say yet, Christ; whose Office it is, can make me believe: But Satan may say, He may, but he will not; why? This is to doubt of Christ. I must be on his Good-will wholly, ye cannot turn; but I look to the Lord to turn me. *Jer. xxxi 28. Turn thou me; for thou art the Lord my God.* In a Word, The Foundation of all thy Happiness is in God. 'Tis dangerous therefore to misdoubt these Foundations. Therefore the Question is, What will, What

What can Christ do? Say, I will never misdoubt him, being therefore wholly beat from thy Self-debate, and Dispute, anent Christ, and hear no Word of Objection against what is in thee: For Christ looks not to that, and all is nothing to the Purpose; and misdoubt not Christ, till Satan can prove, he is either cruel or weak, or coming to Judgment with the Law; and this I have proven already not to be so. Wants thou a Title? (1.) Then overlook thy self wholly, and thy Faith, look to the free Promise; and dispute and see, whether or not may not this give thee a free Title, (2.) When thou would be turned, and cannot turn thy self, say with *Ephraim*, Lord turn me, Why? For thou art the Lord my God. (3.) Wants thou Mercy? say, Be merciful; Why so? For thy Name's sake, not for any Thing in me; Not unto us, &c. But thou art sinful; but he hath Mercy on whom he will: But thou hast nothing to do with his Mercy; no more Claim than the Lord hath given me indeed, and I shall never believe he will give bad Titles; His Word is enough, and very sure, and is a strong Foundation.

Lastly, Christ Jesus his Coming to save Sinners, is not a bare History or Prophecy, with which we have nothing ado, but to read it; but 'tis the Lord's Ground given us of believing, and the Advantage he gives us over himself as it were. This is our very Claim to Christ and Heaven; and therefore a *Saying worthy of Acceptation*: A Sentence that we must lay hold on: And this Saying as faithful, and as to be accepted by us, and purposed for us, and as our Claim made so, by God himself; so must we build our Hopes upon it, and must believe it will do; seeing it is given of God for our Use: So then, if a poor Sinner be asked, What is the Ground of his Hope and Consolation? He will answer, *Christ came to save Sinners*: But if it be replied again, What Interest have ye in this Saying? The Soul must say, This Saying is appointed by God as my Security, which therefore I am to lay hold upon, and on which I am to plead; and

therefore a *Saying of Acceptation*, a Saying to be laid hold on. But if Unbelief shall say, He came to save a few Sinners only; ye must say, Let Christ and you part betwixt you; he will defend the Validity of his own Promise: This being all my Evidence, I am not to dispute the Relevancy of them; For I know, Christ would not stop a bad Security in my Hand for Salvation: Therefore I will believe my self to be one of the Number of the Sinners Christ came to save; I will put it up, and seeing this is the End, why it was said, and given, that it might be received, I will receive it, and lay hold upon it, and believe there shall be a Fulfilling.

12thly, The 12th *Consideration*, Christ is no other-wise offered, declared and received, than in his Word of Promise; Christ came to save Sinners, is the *Saying worthy of Acceptation*: As the Heart therefore complies with the Promise, so it complies with Christ, and closes with him. Whoever therefore shall hold, receive and welcome the Promise, receives and welcomes Christ: Whoever holds up the Promise, holds up Christ: When this Promise is offered, Christ is offered; when this Promise is given, Christ is given; Then, tho' ye cannot win to Heaven, nor Christ will not come to you; yet he comes in the Promise and Word to your Mouth and Heart: Your believing and welcoming of this Promise, is your coming to Christ. Let the Doors of your Faith and Acceptance lay hold on this Word, and ye have Christ sure enough. Ye think, if Christ would send you down a Promise from Heaven, whereby he were engaged to help you, ye think then ye would believe; Why, the very Bible is but a Bundle of Christ's Obligations to you, delivered from Heaven, and ye need no other from Christ but this: Here thou may'st have the Answer of all thy Prayers: Refuse not this by thy Unbelief and Peevishness then, and never trouble your self with another Title to them than what God hath given you to them already.

13th Consideration, The Gospel declares Christ to Sinners in general, under an universal Notion as it were, and not to particular Persons: The Gospel abstracts from Elect and Reprobates, Humbled and Unhumbled; all that are called by the Name of Sinners, including all, and excepting none but Devils and righteous Persons: Therefore, poor Soul to whom this Word comes, if thou be not righteous, see thy self included, and except not where Christ hath not excepted; no Exception therefore can be warrantably proponed; why thou shouldst not come.

14th Consideration, Christ and Salvation by him, are freely purchased, freely offered, freely given to poor Sinners; no Condition here at all; no Condition of Christ's coming to save Sinners, no Condition of this Offer, nothing to be done ere we lay hold on it; *but whosoever will, let him come and buy without Money,* and meddle with it as freely, as tho' God were bound by Debt to give it him, and as tho' he had purchased it with the Sweat of his Brows: Here what a fine Bargain Sinners are come to!



MEDITATION II.

The Nature of the Gospel handled.

THE Gospel, if I mistake not, is all one with the new Covenant, *Mark xvi. 15.* it is called a Covenant, in respect of Parties engaging; it is called a Promise likewise; it is called the new Gospel, because the glad Tidings of it are holden forth to Sinners; it is called the New Testament.

in respect of the Death of the Testator, and the Benefits therein bequeathed. And it may be defined, The Lord's gracious Promise to poor Sinners, conveying Right unto them to Jesus Christ and all his Benefits; requiring Faith as the Means to make this effectual, and actual Obedience for Thankfulness; but we shall speak afterwards of the Condition of the new Covenant, improperly so called. From this Definition, these Things seem evident, (1.) That all the poor Sinner's Happiness is in a Promise. (2.) That it is in an absolute Promise. (3.) That this Promise is to Men as Sinners. (4.) That there is Right given them unto these Things contained in the Promise. (5.) That there is a certain Conveyance of this Right, or that this Right is not to them simply, but as it is declared and conveyed.

For the *first*, It may be asked, Why the Lord would bestow the Privileges of the new Covenant by way of Promise? *Ans.* (1.) To shew his own Bounty; nothing freer than a Gift, and therefore, *Rom. iv. It's of Faith*, or from the Object Faith, *that it might be of Grace*: The Promises then giving Jesus Christ freely in such spiritual Benefits, do hold out the Riches of the Bounty of God, the Mercies being great, and a Promise being the most magnificent Way to convey these Things unto the Soul, *Eph. i. 4, 5, 6.* (2.) 'Tis the Will of God to bring People off themselves, or any Thing in themselves, whether revealed or not, *lest any Man should boast, 1 Cor. i. 31. He hath made him Wisdom, &c. that no Flesh should glory*: The Lord therefore likes Faith well; because a Man by it comes out of himself, and lives on and from another. (3.) The Lord will have us depend on himself and his Word, before Light, Comfort, and every Thing: These Promises therefore shew our Life is not in our selves, but in another, on whom we therefore should depend, believe, love, and glory in. (4.) To assure us of the Certainty of the Things promised; as when we doubt of our Friend, he gives us his Word upon it, and gives us his Bond and written Promise: So the Lord,

to create Faith in the Hearts of his People on himself; doth promise them such Things as they want; which Promise is our Security, which we are to accept: Hope might be gathered from the Attributes of God's Power and Mercy; but this breeds Quietness and Rest of Mind. (5.) To particularize our Mercies unto us; hence, though we could from general Notions of God's Attributes have some Hopes and Faith of general Things, yet could we not know for what particular Mercy to believe, and in particular Straits we would be left in the Dumps; but the Lord, to tell us that particular Good we may expect from him, hath condescended to promise that to us particularly: So that we know not only that we are to believe, but what we are to believe, *not only that ye might believe, but that ye might believe this Record*, 1 Joh. v. 10, 14. (6.) To evidence the Lord's Faithfulness: For howsoever, by bestowing Grace and Glory immediately, he might evidence Mercy, Bounty, Power and Goodness; yet this would not evidence his Faithfulness; because here were no Fulfilling of his Word: And therefore, that the Lord might manifest his Truth, or the Truth of his Word, the Promises, &c. the Sinner believes: He suspends a long Time, till his Word be tried, and at last, through a Multitude of Improbabilities, and unexpectedly, it is fulfilled; which makes the Soul to cry out and wonder at the Faithfulness of God. (7.) To beget justifying Faith; whereof the Promises are the Seed. (8.) To make the Mercy sure unto the Faithful; for, had they it in Hand; they would soon waste it, all Flesh being Grass; but God hath kept and secured their Mercies in an immovable unchangeable Word, settled for ever in the Heavens, and that endureth for ever, 1 Pet. i. 21. That therefore the Consolation of the Lord's People might be secured and settled for ever, the Lord hath thought fit to secure it in a Word. Therefore, to comfort us in our Afflictions, these are as a Staff to hold us up from sinking. Promises are not only Grounds of Faith and Hope; but of Rejoicing. *These Things*

Things have I spoken, that your Joy might be full;
 1 John i. 4. Psal. xxxii. 10, 11.

Secondly, These Promises are absolute, in which the Happiness of Believers doth consist. *Christ came to save Sinners*, which is the Saying of Acceptation, is an absolute Promise. *Reasons* why the Lord makes Promises absolutely. (1.) To show the Freedom of the Covenant of Grace, and the Bounty of God, the Riches of the Mercy he shows some, nay, his Bounty, and so shows the Promise in general, in that he is willing to bestow; but to give Right absolutely to it, shows great Bounty; to give a great Bounty for a Matter much below the Worth of it, shows Freeness of Mind; but to give it freely, shows much Liberality: See therefore, wonder and admire the Lord's Freedom in his gracious Promise. (2.) To take away all Grounds of Misbelief from a poor Sinner, to engage all to believe; for if this were not, but if it were founded on any Thing in themselves, here would be evermore Doubting, and no strong Foundation for Believing; nor would the poor empty Sinner, finding nothing in himself, ever be made to believe; because he never could see the Condition: Or if he did, his Faith would be weak. (3.) Because this is the fittest Way to give a Claim and Right to all, so as, though some might see a Condition in them; yet all could not, would not see who see sometimes nothing in themselves: And therefore, that all might have Ground to believe, the Lord hath given them an absolute Right. (4.) To make such as misbelieve inexcusable, this shall make the Observers of lying Vanities, speechless, that they did not embrace their own Mercies. This absolute Right given shall make utterly inexcusable, that a Promise was left, and yet no Entering in because of Unbelief. (5.) To make the Covenant of Grace sure; to make it sure both in its Rise and Continuance; therefore there is no Clause irritant to keep from Believing, and when Believers, there is nothing that should loose this Bond again: For it is absolute; and tho' we believe not, yet is he faithful that promised. (6.) This appears, in that
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the Condition it self is promised. (7.) In that the Scriptures make absolute Promises the Ground of Believing, 1 Tim. i. 15. It's most false to say then, that we have nothing to do with absolute Promises till we believe.

Thirdly, These absolute Promises belong to Men, as Sinners. *Reason* (1). Because Sinners only are capable to receive such: As when God promises the new Heart; this cannot be meant to them who actually believe: Because such have it already; and therefore this were ridiculous to promise to give a Thing which they have. (2.) Because the whole Strain of the Gospel speaks thus; saves Sinners, reconciles Enemies, justifies the Ungodly, gives Gifts to the Rebellious. (3.) Because Christ and Salvation to Men are relative Terms; and Men, as they correlate, can come under no other Notion than as Blind, Destroyed, Sick, Miserable, &c. Seeing Christ is Light, Life, Physician, Health, Righteousness, &c. (4.) Because Christ, *in whom all the Promises are Tea and Amen*, did not represent the World as righteous; but as fallen and destroyed: And therefore, dying for them as such; his Death as such belongs to them. (5.) Because here the Freedom and Bounty of Grace shines most, and is admired: For to bestow great Things on me freely, is wonderful; but to bestow them on Enemies, and while Enemies; *Wonder at this, O Heavens!* (6.) Because Sinners are commanded to believe: And therefore the Promises, which are the Seed and Ground of Faith, must likewise belong to them, which were given for this End, that ye might believe. (7.) Because *we ought to draw near with full Assurance*, which the Promises received, as belonging and made to elect Sinners, can never be a Ground to us; seeing our Election is uncertain to us, until we be made actually to believe.

Fourthly, That these absolute Promises, thus made to Sinners, give them a Right unto the Thing promised: For clearing of this, I shall shortly show, (1.) What Right this absolute Promise doth give. (2.) Give some Grounds. (3.) Loose some Objections; because
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the Point is material and weighty; yet difficult, in respect of the Multitude of Objections; that Satan seeks to muzzle and darken this Truth in. For the *first* then; *viz.* What that Right is, which the Gospel-declaration doth give to Sinners, which is the Ground of their Faith? A Right in general, is that, whereby it becomes just and equal to the Person having this Title or Right, to seek, take, possess, and use that Thing, whereunto he hath a Title.

There is, (1.) A natural Right, such a Right as God hath to all Creatures: Thus any Thing bought with Money, belongs unto the Buyer: Thus Men have Right to God, as a Creator. (2.) There is a Right in Conscience; which is, when it is just to claim a Thing; and yet illegal or unjust to possess it: As he that hath a good Cause, hath in Conscience a Right unto the Thing; but because of Intricacies of Law, he cannot immediately, as he whose Lands are possessed by an illegal Possessor; tho' he may seek his Right by Law, yet cannot immediately possess, or take up Mails and Duties. (3.) There is a forensical sentential Right, which is conveyed to a Man by the Sentence of a lawful Judge, discerning, after lawful *Litiscontestation*; such a Thing claimed to belong to the Person in whose Favours it is pronounced. (4.) There is a Right of Disposition or Promise, not that which is *titulo oneroso*; but *lucrativo*, for that is natural: But this Right of Disposition gives Ground to the Party to seek and take them when offered, and make Use of them when given. (5.) There is an actual personal Right, whereby the Person himself is clothed actually and personally with his Right; or a real Right, which indeed is in Favours of a Person, but is in another Hand to his Behoof; and is not personally possess'd; because neither actually transferred by the Giver, nor received by the Party: If this be their Lands, it is a Right of Possession; called so, in Respect of the Things contained in the Right, and in respect of the Right of Disposition it self, it is personal: When a Man then receives his Right in his own Person; this Man hath

a personal Right; then he receives the Things to which he hath a Right, he hath a Right of Possession, whether these Things be moveable or heritable. (6.) There is an aptitudinary dispositive Right, which is opposite to an hereditary Right, which is, when a Man hath a Right unto a Thing; but, because of some personal Indisposition or Impediment, is not fitted actually to meddle therewith, but is in Law uncapacitate; therefore to meddle as young Heirs, who have Right to their Father's Estates, but are uncapacitate to meddle, because of their Years until their Majority, *Gal. iv. 1, 2, 3.* And this I take to be the Meaning of *Rev. xxii. 13, 14.* not much different. *Lastly*, From that which they call a mediate and immediate Right: This they call, that, whereby a Man hath Right to possess a Thing immediately: That whereby a Man hath Right unto a Thing; but is not to have it immediately, but by the Intervention of some Conditions, and physical, not moral Causes.

Hence these Conclusions. (1.) Unbelievers and unregenerate Persons have not an actual personal Right unto the Promises, *Rom. ix. 7, 8. 1 Tim. iv. 8.* for if the Promises did actually belong to all unregenerate Persons; then it should follow, God to be unfaithful, if so be he did not perform them unto them. And this Mr. *Baxter* only, and no more, proves in his Appendix to his Aphorisms of Justification. (2.) None, till they believe, have any aptitudinary Right to Salvation; that Right whereby the Persons are qualified, and that is by the new Nature, *Col. i. 12. Whereby they are made meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. Rev. xxii. 13, 14.* Hence the Keepers of the Commands of God, are said to be meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance, or to have a Right unto the Tree of Life; but of this more afterwards. (3.) No Person hath a natural Right unto the Promises: God is by no Necessity of Nature to give any Thing to any of his Creatures; For, *who hath given him, and it shall be repaid?* (4.) Unregenerate Persons have not a sentential forensical Right, declaring them personally just, this being by

Faith laying Hold on Christ (as a good Advocate) upon which the Lord pronounces *in foro Conscientia*, that they are free, and doth judicially absolve them; for if they be not actually just, then are they not sentimentally just. The Judgment of God is according to Truth; under a Sentence of Condemnation, therefore not under a Sentence of Absolution, *John* iii. 18. *Rom.* viii. 1. *Eph.* i. 13. but *under the Law*. Hence, (5.) They have not a personal Right; because this is only received, which wanting Faith, by which this is received, they cannot be said to have it: Personally under Condemnation, therefore not personally under Justification. (6.) None have immediate Right to Grace and Glory; but *all is through Christ, in whom all the Promises are Yea and Amen.* 2 *Cor.* i. 20. *Eph.* i. 4. *Gal.* iii. 16. 2 *Tim.* i. 9. Nay this Promise, *I will give a new Heart*, was given first to Christ, not to him as the Subject, to whom it was fulfilled; but as the Subject, for whose Sake it was to be fulfilled: Nor shall I say, that any have Right to Heaven immediately, because not chosen but through Sanctification, and Belief of the Truth. 1. All have a Right of Promise and Disposition to Jesus Christ, and all his Benefits. *Rom.* ix. 4. by which these Things may be said to belong unto them, and by which it may be said to be theirs: For these Promises are declared to all. 2. All have a Relation to Jesus Christ as a Saviour; he is the Saviour of all Men, and *made legally of God, Wisdom, Righteousness Sanctification and Redemption, that no Flesh might glory: He is Life, and that Life is the Light of Men. And he is the Covenant of the People, and their Salvation, and their Lord and Master.* 3. All within the visible Church are in a real Covenant with Christ, and that of Grace, *Rom.* ix. 4. tho' not inward, tho' their Hearts have never closed with this Lord Jesus: Men are really, though externally, married with Christ; as a Woman whose Heart is wedded with another; yet if externally married, is yet really married; and that Husband is her righteous Husband, tho' she be not a dutiful Wife to him: So visible Professors, they are really

really married to Christ, tho' not dutiful Spouses; hence called *Branches* in him, *John xv. 3. 4.* They have a Right of Confirmation, in respect they have the Seals of the Covenant; *as many as are baptised into Christ have put on Christ, Gal. iii. 27.* 5. It is such a Right, as the Lord is thereby engaged to perform the Tenor thereof to them; so as there wants nothing to your Title, nothing to your Happiness, but your receiving of it. 6. It is an absolute Right made to Sinners, as I proved before; not immediately, but mediately through Christ their Representative, to whom the Promise was first made, *and who is the Covenant of the People*, to whom as unto their Saviour (*in whom their Help is*) *all the Ends of the Earth should look and be saved.* 7. It is a proclaimed Right, an intimate published Right: Hence Ministers are said to publish *glad Tidings*, *Rom. x. 5. Eph. iii. 9. Rom. iii. 25. Whoever hath an Ear to hear, let him hear. Listen, O Isles, &c.* 8. It is an ample sure Right, having no Nullity in it at all, which is a constant Ground of Believing, *a Covenant well ordered in all Things, and sure.* It is a free absolute Right; object not therefore the Non-performance of the Condition. It is made to Sinners; object not therefore, *I am a guilty condemned Sinner*: It is to thee, and thee only; it is by Christ thy Saviour offering what is thine really to thee. It is universal to all that hear it; do not say therefore, *He means not me*: Make no Objection therefore, *It is particular*; say not then, *He means not me*. It is constant; say not therefore, *My Time is gone. All the Day long have I stretched out my Hands: Now is the accepted Time.* In a Word, ye have all Grounds of Believing made out unto you: Whatever thou wouldst have for thy Security, thou hast; do not therefore by thy Unbelief seclude thy self: Of all Mens Torments, thine shall be greatest in Hell; Wo to him for evermore, that splits upon Unbelief, and looks on the Lord as One deceitful and ambiguous, after he hath given all imaginable Grounds for thy Security: What could thy Heart wish more for than this?

Consider these Grounds for it, 1. Do not the ex-

press Words of Scripture say as much? *Jonah* ii. 8. *They that follow lying Vanities, forsake their own Mercies.* How could they be their own, unless they had some Right unto them? It's a frivolous Answer to say their own, because they might be their own: For then any Thing may be said to be mine, *Heb.* iv. 1. *A Promise is left, and yet through Unbelief come short,* and this is not a Threatning simply; but a Thing that hath been, and may be, as it was to others before, *Rom.* ix. 4. It's said that the Promise and the Adoption did belong unto the unbelieving Jews. *Ans.* They belong to them in Profession, be it so; yet really they belong to them. Some say, It seemed to belong to them: But *contra* *, The Scripture speaks of it in such a real Way, as it doth of other Things which really are. They are theirs conditionally, say some; so do they to *Turks, Indians and Pagans*, if they believe: It doth not belong therefore until the Condition be performed, no more than to him that hath no Condition made to him: So Heaven may be said to be the Devil's, on Condition he can scale Heaven and possess, or if God would give him a Right thereto.

Consider, *2dly*, Then the Covenant of Grace were not free; nor were the Ground of our Hope purely on God for Remission of Sins, if this were.

Consider, *3dly*, Because the Promises are made to such, I mean, such as *have Ears to hear.* *Listen, O Isles.* These therefore that are called to hear the Promises and Tidings of the Gospel, to them these Tidings and Promises do belong; but these are to Sinners, and under that Consideration, as I have proved already, *Rom.* 5. 7. *Rom.* 4. 4, 5, *1 Tim.* 1. 15. *I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.* *Mat.* 9. 12. *Hos.* 14. 1. *Isa.* 61. 3. It's the Ground of believing, *Rev.* 3. 18. because miserable, *buy, &c.* And Saints have made this the Ground of their Prayers.

Consider, *4thly*, Because the Promises are the Ground and Object of Faith, and therefore must be before the
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* That is, *On the other Hand.*

Act of Faith; And Faith sees and believes it no other-wise than it is in it self: Now there can be no Comfort in a general Promise at all. Ere Faith can apply this as its own, it must see it as its own: If therefore I be not contained, nor meant in this Promise, *viz.* Christ came to save Sinners; Tho' I accept it, this will not make it mine. To take a Bond belonging to another Man will do no good to me; nor can be a Ground of any Consolation or Faith to me. What? shall I believe from such a Word, if I do not see it is to me? and if to me, then have I Right unto it. *1 Tim. 1. 15.* doth evidently declare, that the absolute Promises are Grounds of Faith, *a Saying of Acceptation.* The Eunuchs are commanded to lay Hold on his Covenant. What is this? *Jer. 31. I will give a new Heart.*

5thly, How can the Soul be in *bona fide* * to possess or take that, to which it hath no Right? Faith would then be but an Usurping; Therefore, when by Faith we receive the Promise and Christ, necessary it is that we have a Title unto it first: Possession follows a Right and Title.

6thly, In respect God gives them this Title. *I have given him for a Covenant to the People, a Light unto the Blind.* And He is made of God unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. *1 Cor. 1. 31. That no Flesh might glory.* What God promises and gives to any, that is theirs.

7thly, If they had no Title in God, their Departing from him could not be called Adultery, Whoredom, Disobedience; a most certain Token, that the Lord is their real Master and Husband: If it were not so, but in Appearance only; then their Departing from the Lord would be likewise in Appearance. One that is not really married to a Man, and commits Whoredom, doth not really commit Adultery; but so it is, *Although I was a Husband unto them. Put away thy Adulteries, ye Adulterers and Adulteresses, &c. Jer. iii.*

8thly,

* That is, Entitled.

8thly, When Persons, in their own Sense unconverted, have made this the Ground of their Coming : Or thus, the Lord's Interest in a People, is the Foundation, 1. Of their Prayers for Conversion, *Turn thou me, for thou art the Lord my God, Jer. xxxi. 19.* Wouldst thou, O unconverted Sinner, have the Lord to turn thee ; and canst not know what should move him to this ? Say as *Ephraim, Turn me ; for thou art the Lord my God :* Therefore, God he was their God ; when the Man could not say he was turned, 2. It is the Ground of Turning and Coming to God, *Jer. ii. 29. Behold we come ; for thou art the Lord our God. Turn because I am married unto you.* 3. It is the Ground of all Obedience, as in *Exod. xx.* may appear, *I am the Lord thy God ; therefore have no other Gods ; I am a jealous God.* Are ye bound to obey God ? To turn to him ? To be reconciled ? Then the Lord is yours : For this is the formal Motive to this, Be reconciled ; because, *Christ was made a Curse for us.* 4. It is the Ground of all Glorifying in the Lord, and not glorying in our selves, *1 Cor. i. 21.* because *made the Righteousness of God to us :* Therefore, whoever are bound to these Duties, to them the Motives and Foundations of these Duties do belong : And therefore, I say with Mr. *Bradford* in one of his Letters, " As such as thy Will is to obey God, by Virtue of " that Command ; *Thou shalt have no other Gods, but* " *ME :* As certainly is thy Understanding to believe " that Declararion, *I am the Lord thy God.* Shake " this, and ye shake all Faith and all Obedience, which " are buikded upon this.

Consider, 9thly, They have no other allowed Lord, or Portion, or Husband, therefore, but the Lord : Hence, not having any other but him, it follows *that he is ;* the Soul being an Act, must have an appointed Object : This is not the Creature ; Therefore it is God ; hence, he is called *their Rest and resting Place.* It is a good Ground therefore to close with him. Oh, I have no other to comfort me, to depend on, to believe on, to glory in.

10thly, Scripture frequently says of a visible, graceless People, that they are his : In their most declining, graceless, open, scandalous State, they are termed his still, *my People*.

11thly, They receive the Seals of these Promises ; therefore to them doth the Covenant belong, *Acts ii. 38. To you the Covenant belongs, therefore be baptized* ; the Unconverted are baptized, therefore they are within the Covenant. Have ye Right unto your Lands, when ye are infest in them ? Then have ye Right unto the Covenant of Grace, Baptism being a Seal thereof, or an Infeftment thereupon. Are ye in Baptism really bound to your Duty, which is one Part of your Covenant ? Then is the Lord as really bound to you ; therefore have baptized Persons *put on Christ, and are baptized to his Death*. Baxter saith, It is a conditional Covenant, that Baptism seals. *Contra ** : That which the Lord calls his Covenant, is absolute. *I will be your God, will give a new Heart*. (2.) Heathens are under a conditional Covenant ; for if they *believe, they shall be saved*. (3.) It is not only a Sign of Glory, but of Grace ; called therefore *the Laver of Regeneration*, or their Title to it : *Ergo*, the Condition it self is sealed. (4.) Baptism is a Seal given for confirming of the Faith of his People, that he is their God. Now, if it did but confirm this, *If ye believe, ye shall be saved*, it were no Comfort, nor need People Confirmation in this ; because few doubt the Truth of this conditional Promise. (5.) This is built upon this false and destructive Principle, That the Covenant of Grace is conditional : Which is a Contradiction in it self, and which hath been the Cause of all the Unbelief ; and so consequently of all the Evil that hath come upon us. Mr. Baxter's Arguments, every one of them, may be answered with the Distinction of actual and personal Right, and legal, though real Right.

12thly, Because the Lord hath Right to them ; therefore have they Right unto him : They are Correlates, and there-

* That is, *On the other Hand*.

therefore are mutually related ; if such a Man be mine, I am his ; and if I believe, he is mine ; if my Master, then I am his Servant ; if my Wife, then am I her Husband ; if mine, then I am his.

13^{thly}, Have not all Sinners, to whom the Gospel comes, as good a Right unto Christ, as the *Jews*, that slew a Man at unawares, had unto the *City of Refuge*, as the stung *Israelites* to the *brazen Serpent*, and as the *Jews* had unto their Lands at the Year of Jubilee, which were all Types of Christ ? Now look, though the *City of Refuge* was appointed to the foresaid Persons, and they had a Right unto it ; yet if they did not run thereinto, they could have no Benefit by it, *Heb. vi. 18*. And therefore these had Right to the *City of Refuge* ; so have poor distressed Sinners to Christ, who is the *City of Refuge*, and *brazen Serpent*.

14^{thly}, Consider, This clears the Gospel best of Double-dealing, from which some learned Men do profess it's above them to do ; as indeed, in denying this, they will not easily do : For if all have not a Right to these Things, how can the Lord's Ambassadors offer them to poor Souls ? If therefore in themselves these Mercies be not to me, neither can they be offered to me : It's unreasonable to offer that to me, which in its Use is not for me, but destined for the Elect : For this were to pervert the Nature and Use of a Thing, and this would afford but small Comfort : For, when I have received it, I have but received that which did not concern me. What will a Bond or Obligation, not made to me, nor belonging to me, avail me, though I take it and receive it ? But supposing all to have an Interest in the Promises, this frees the Offer from any Double-dealing imaginable ; because it declares Things belonging to themselves, made theirs by the free Gift of them in Christ the Saviour of the World ; and therefore bids them, by Reason of this, believe and accept their own. The Gospel first publisheth the glad Tidings of a Saviour to all ; and then desires all to embrace and lay hold on it. Christ would not be-

How these Promises, *else it is not mine to give, but to these for whom it is prepared.*

15thly, Else ye shall never shew a clear Ground of Believing. Sure I am, this gives the most clear Ground of Believing, of any; Take, possess, Why? They are your own: Believe, use Promises, Why? They belong to you; Glory in him. Oh, I have no Right, said the Soul: Yet ye have; He is made of God, Righteousness, Wisdom, &c. Even as the first Adam was in our Stead, and we were to fall or stand in him: Even so, The second Adam is made our Covenant by God, which the Gospel declares, and upon which Ground we are desired to believe. And do we not by Experience find, that when poor Souls are called to believe, and embrace the Promises; Oh, they are not mine, saith the poor Soul, I have no Right to them? But they are offered to you, therefore receive them: Alas! will the Soul say, if it were to put out my Hands, and take it, I might do something; but my Understanding being imployed, as to believe there must not be some authoritative Ground given for this only; but likewise a rational Ground, upon which the Soul must believe; Ye doubt if Christ be yours. Know it the Lord hath made him yours: Your Part is to entertain and welcome him, and receive your own Mercies.

16thly, This doth make the Reprobate most inexcusable, and makes their Torments in Hell very just, and vex them exceedingly; when they shall be made to know, that they had as good Right to Christ and Heaven, as they to had their Lands and Estates, in which they were infest: They only starved for Hunger, because they would not eat this Meat; were condemned, because they would not lay hold on their Pardon, nor present their Discharge: Died in Prison, because they would not come out.

17thly, This shews the Freedom of the Covenant of Grace most: If our Rights depend on Faith; then the Covenant of Grace were not free: For that Covenant, which requires a moral Condition, is not free. We will say, Christ works Faith too, without any De-

fast in the Blood, of his own Accord. I answer, By this it will follow, that the Lord is free in working of Faith; but not in his Promise, in his Covenant: And therefore, tho' his Actions and Works were of Grace; yet his Promises were not of Grace: If the Lord's working of Faith of his own Accord, made the Covenant of Grace free; then this likewise were a free Covenant. Pull the Sun out of the Firmament, and give away your Estates, Lives, Fortunes, and do all what I command with a perfect Heart, and that for ever; supposing that God did work this Condition in some few, as he might; unless God promised to work it in them, and then it were free.

18thly, And this is the Way to make the Word of Grace very sure, and to give undoubted Grounds of Believing. All the Grounds of Believing, are Fosterers of Doubting, but this: Tell them, Christ came to save Sinners; this is elect Sinners: How know I it is me? Tell them, If they believe, they shall be saved: They will say, Believe; But what? Hence they cannot believe; because they see not what to believe: Tell them of Christ's Good-will; Oh it is not to me: Tell them, they are commanded to believe; True, say they, this makes it Duty; but what shall convince my Understanding? Tell me what? Take Christ, and he will be yours: Wo to that Man, that hath no other Title to Christ or Heaven, but his Faith, or Love. Some say, If ye be willing to have Christ, he is yours, and ye shall be eternally blest with him; but this is most false: For many are willing to have him, that through Unbelief shall never get him†. Besides, there will be multiplied Objections against their Willingness; as, I will not with all my Heart, I will not him alone: But now, supposing this Ground laid; when a poor Sinner enquires to be saved, What he shall do? *Answer, Receive the Lord Jesus.* *Objection,* What have I ado with Christ, and on what Ground? *Ans.* The Father hath given him to thee for a Light, He is thine own. *Obj.* But this is but to few. *Ans.* It is to all who hear it; and therefore to thee, and

and the Lord gives thee this as thy Title and Claim : The Mercies are thy own, and that freely ; and therefore take him by his Word, refuse not this Obligation made and offered to thee. Thou canst do nothing for Heaven, hast no Title at all ; here's one for thee, *Receive not this Grace therefore in vain.* *Obj.* This were a Means to harden the whole World, and to make them presumptuous : Seeing there is a Promise given, this will make all believe they shall be saved ; seeing they have God's Promise for it. *Ans.* No ; for though there be Promises left ; unless ye cordially embrace and believe upon them, ye cannot be saved : And this no Hypocrite can, or will do. *Obj.* Then is God a Liar, seeing he gives Promises that shall never be fulfilled to them. No, because, unless they lay hold on it, it shall do them no Good. Though I give Bond to a Person for a Thousand Merks, and at the Term offer Payment ; if he refuse, I am not unfaithful ; himself is to blame, that will not take it. God makes a Promise ; but adds this ; *Unless ye believe, ye shall not be established.* *Obj.* All Promises are made to Believers and Holiness. I *answer*, There is a twofold Promise, (1.) A Promise that begets Faith, and this is the free Gift of Righteousness, which ye see, 1. *Tim.* 1. 15. *Rom.* 4. 5. *Jer.* 31. 32. And there is a Promise to Faith, *Rom.* 5. 23. The first begets Faith, the other strengthens Faith. In the first, the Sinner hath a Right to lay hold on that Promise ; In the second, the Believer hath Ground of Expectation of the Promise. (2.) The Promises belong to Piety too ; I grant this Right is cumulative, not privative. *Obj.* Then a Man should be condemned and justified at one Time : Condemned, as every Unbeliever is ; and cleared, in respect of the Promise and free Gift. I have answered this Objection largely elsewhere ; but yet know, that in divers Respects they may : As first, actually and sententially they may, tho' legally in Christ they are reconciled : As a Man denounced for Rebellion, to whom a Suspension and Discharge of the Debt is purchased ; this Man is actually at the King's Horn, and a Rebel ; and yet in respect of the Suspension purchased, and by Relaxation

purchased, he is the King's free Subject : So it is here, actually under a Sentence of Condemnation ; yet a Discharge is purchased, and Suspension and Relaxation is purchased in Christ, and so are legally free. *Obj.* But, is it not absurd to say, that God shall be engaged to give that which he never intends to give ? *Ans.* 1. The Scripture saith, *He that believeth not, makes God a Liar.* 2. This declares but the Sinner's Claim and Title, not a Prophecy what he will do. 3. God gave the Land of *Canaan* to the *Israelites*, who never entered into it, *Ezek. xx. 15.* so doth he give Heaven : *A Promise may be left, and yet coming short through Unbelief.* 4. The Performance of the Condition, is upon a moral physical Condition, tho' the Right it self be not but absolutely given. *Obj.* Still the Covenant is conditional ; *For, unless ye believe, ye shall not be established ;* this is equivalent to them that make Faith the Condition of it. *I answer,* It will not follow ; because Faith and Works are not required as moral Conditions, but as physical : Tho' I give Bond for a Thousand Merks, it's true, if my Creditor do not receive the Money, but shall refuse it, he shall never have it ; and yet the Bond is absolute : Therefore the Right and Claim is absolutely given, yet the Fruits of it is given upon Condition of Faith ; hereby ye have Ground to plead out your Right. *Obj.* Here is no Advantage for all his Title ; if he do not believe, he shall perish ; and what greater Comfort is here ? *I answer* with *Paul, Rom. iii. 3. Much every Way ;* because ye have a Claim and Title, and hereby are empowered to lay hold on, and claim and possess all spiritual Mercies : And tho' this Bond be never made effectual, which is accidentally occasioned, through your wilful refusing of it by Unbelief ; yet the Promise, Offer of it, and Claim to it, is in it self a Mercy. *Obj.* They are only to the Seed, *Rom. ix. 7, 8.* therefore not to all ; these are only the Children of the Promise. *Ans.* It is so, in respect of divine Intention, intending it only for their Good ; not in respect of external legal Destination. *Obj.* What Advantage hath the Believer then

then by the Unbeliever, seeing both are cleared? *I answer*, The Believer hath an actual compleat Title; as he is legally free, so is he actually free. The Believer hath not only Meat in the House, but likewise in his Belly; and therefore shall feed him, so as he shall not perish. The one is assured fully of Heaven, and is beyond all Hazard: The other hath only a Right, which is to be made effectual through his using thereof. *Obj.* I have no inward Call. *I answer*, The Rule of Faith is God's speaking in the Word, not in the Heart. *Obj.* I am not humbled nor wearied, therefore not fit to believe, *Mat. xi. 28.* *Ans.* These are the Qualifications rather of these that will come, than of these that ought to come, or have a Right to come. This is again cumulative, not privative; because the Wearied and Heavy-laden are bidden come, therefore, none else; it will not follow. *Rev. iii. 18.* These that *know not they are miserable*, are bidden come.

Fifthly, That there is a certain Conveyance of this Right unto them, to whom it belongs, which is that Way, Channel, through, and by which these Things are made theirs; which in Law is called the Conveyance and Progress of it: Whence it comes to pass, that Men, and not Devils, visible Professors, and not *Indians*, have thereby Right which others have not.

Quest. How is the Right and Title conveyed and made ours? *Ans.* These Ways: By Jesus Christ, his undertaking from Eternity for the lost World, whereby Man lost, undone and destroyed, were by Jesus Christ undertaken for; who came in their Place, and took Burden for them: That look as a Debtor is really absolved, when a Friend transacts and gives Surety for him, and retires his Bond, though this be unknown to himself; so condemned guilty Man, by the Lord Jesus his undertaking for him, is thereby absolved and freed, *2 Cor. v. 21.* *God hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us. He who was the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World. If ye seek me, Let these go free.* 2. When our Land and

and Fathers were espoused to God in a Covenant; then were we likewise married unto him. Hence, *Deut. 29. 10. 11. I made not this Covenant with you that are here alone; but with your Children after you.* Hence, *Levi is said to offer up Tithes in Abraham*; and all are said to have sinned in the first Adam: That look as a Man buys Lands, he doth it not in his own Name; but in the Name of his Posterity, his Heirs and Successors: Even so, when our Fathers according to the Flesh did engage with the Lord, we who are their Children, and were then in their Loins, were likewise engaged; and as we in them became his People, so did the Lord in becoming our Fathers God, become our God likewise; *the Covenant belonging to you and your Children.*

3. The Lord gives us Right to him, and to all his Benefits, in the Ordinance of Baptism; the Use and Privilege of which is so little known in the World, *Gal. 3. 25. As many as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*: And hence are said to be *baptized to his Death*; As when a Man gets Infeftment and Safine in the Lands, he by that acquires Right in the Lands, tho' he do not possess them: Even so Baptism being a Seal of the Covenant; hence who have the Seal, have the Thing sealed. Oh that we knew our Privilege by Baptism, *Gen. 17. This is my Covenant, &c.*

4. In the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which is a Seal of the Lord's Body and Blood, *given for Remission of Sins*: Hence whoever take the Bread and Wine, do really and sacramentally receive the Lord Jesus. Ye say ye want the Lord Jesus, and cannot get him; Oh come to this Ordinance, and take him, and receive him; take but this Bread and Wine, which is substitute for him, and is sacramentally Himself, and ye receive himself, and in it discern the Lord's Body: If by Faith seeing this, ye receive it, ye receive the Lord Jesus; and when thou doubtest, hast thou Christ or Grace, ask thy Heart, as thou received the Lord's Supper, *Take, eat, this is my Body*: A Man's receiving of Infeftment, is his receiving of his Lands.

5. By the Sound of Preaching, whereby the Lord doth give and
pro-

proclaim Remission of Sins through his Blood; and whosoever hath Ears to hear, by him is Remission of Sins preached unto you: As when we would give a Man Right unto a Thing, we say, Fear not, I give it you; and this Promise made, gives the Man Ground to take it, seek it, and use it; so the Lord in his preached Gospel by his Servants gives himself to them that hear; *the Word is near thee, in thy Mouth, and in thy Mouth*; so that as certainly as the Sound of this Promise doth come to thy Ear, and is in it, even as certainly the Lord Jesus, in that Word thus sounding in thine Ear, is conveyed to thee: The outward Sound is the Sound of Jesus Christ, his Word is himself. 6. By Providence, look as we do to these to whom we give Right, we put and deliver the Papers into their Hands: So the Lord hath, by his Providence, put our Rights in our Hands: How so? Have you a Bible? Yes; then this Voice being to thee, and the Promises of eternal Life being in thy Possession, thou hast thereby received thy Right as really as the Creditor, that hath his Bonds and Obligations in his Hands, hath received Right unto his Money, and upon this hath as great Ground to believe, as thou hast Right to obey because of Commands in thy Bible: *Receive not therefore the Grace of God in vain.* This should make us prize the Scriptures; in having them in our Hands, we are possessed of our Charters for Heaven. Hath a Man Right to Lands, that hath his Charters and Safines in his Chest? Thou questions thy Right to Heaven, and behold, thou hast in thy Hands God's Obligation and Promise of this to thee. *Lastly*, In making the Heart cordially and fully close with the Lord Jesus, then is the Man personally and cordially possess'd of Christ, and the Right is thereby not only externally and really conveyed; but likewise internally and effectually conveyed.

Inferences from this Doctrine, *First*, Hence see, what is the first Thing the Gospel declares, and speaks to poor Sinners; that is, the Promises.

2. That

2. That the Promises absolute, are not merely Prophecies, or Histories of what are, or will be; but are the Declarations of a Sinner's Title, not only declaring what will be to some; but what is every ones Title.

3. That Faith doth not give Right to the Covenant of Grace; but possesseth a Man of his Right.

4. That God is the first Contracter in the Covenant of Grace, and not Man.

5. That the Gospel, properly and strictly, hath no Condition moral at all; because, as I said, it is absolute, and it is a Declaration of the absolute Right made by the Lord to Sinners; and Faith is not the Condition, though it be the Means to make these Things disposed to us beneficial and effectual: And though it be true, that without Faith there is no Salvation; yet this will not infer, nor prove, that the Covenant of Grace is conditional, no more than when I give Bond to pay a thousand Merks Money to a Person, to whom I owe it; is that Bond conditional? because if he refuse Payment, or will not take it when offered, it shall not be given, nor shall he have any Benefit thereby.

6. That this is the great and main Difference betwixt the Covenant of Grace, and the Covenant of Works. In the Covenant of Works, Man's Duty was first, and he was *primus in Obligatione*, or first in Obligation; and God's Part was next: *Do thou*, which was Man's Part; *And thou shalt live*, which was God's Promise, came afterwards: But in the Covenant of Grace, the Lord is *primus in Obligatione*, and is first bound, by which an absolute Right and Title is conveyed, and which is the Ground and Foundation of the Soul's Duty; and then Man's Part comes next, which is Believing and Thankfulness: For though, as to the Event, the Promise is conditional, not morally; yet as to the Promise it self, as far as it confers Right, it is absolute, as in *Isa. Chap. 7. 9.* The Lord promises absolutely *he will deliver them, and confound Rezin, and Pekab the Son of Remaliab*; this is the first Thing: Then is Believing the Duty required next, which this Provision, *that if they will not believe, they shall not be*

after

established. He doth not say to *Ahaz*, First believe, and I will put away *Pekah* the Son of *Remaliam*; no, but promises first, and then requires Believing, and tells them, that if this they do not, it shall not be fulfilled.

7. That in our Resolutions to do Duty, they must arise, not so much from any Grace received, or Likelihoods to perform what we promise; but we must resolve, as confident in the Promise of God: The Lord requires of every one of us a Promise to serve him, with all our Hearts, against Sin, Satan, Flesh and the World; sometimes we find in our selves a Willingness and a Frame of Spirit pliable to this: Then we resolve, *Deut. 5. 29. Jer. 2. 19, 20.* but at other Times we find not our selves able; and therefore, being discouraged, we dare not promise. Both are wrong; we should in both these Cases, promise, not out of any Confidence or Diffidence in our selves; but trusting to perform, from the Consideration of God's Promise to work it in us, as knowing the Lord will keep his Word: As in a Contract of Marriage, a Man may promise to infect his Spouse in forty Chalders of Victual, tho' he have not a Farthing himself; if his Wife's Friend be first in the Obligation to give him a hundred thousand Merks; because he then promises, out of Confidence, that when they have performed their Parts, he may then, through that, be in a Capacity to perform his Part: There is nothing that the Lord requires, but he hath first promised to fulfil and to do, and work it in them: Now there being such a Promise, the Soul then believing, God will perform what he hath promised, out of Confidence of this, though he can do nothing himself; he promises it shall be done: Hence, *turn me, and I shall be turned. Quicken us, and we will call. Through God we shall do valiantly. I will run the Ways of thy Commandments, when thou hast enlarged my Heart. I will do all Things through Christ that strengtheneth me.*

8. That this Right is the Ground and Foundation of all Duties and Worship, &c. Hence *he is thy Lord; turn, because married and redeemed.*

That Baptism doth not seal a conditional Covenant or Proposition, such as this, *If thou believe, thou shalt be saved*; but an absolute Proposition, such as this, *I will be thy God*; which Proposition gives absolute Right unto a poor Sinner, contrary to Mr. Baxter. My Grounds are, besides what I have said formerly, 1. Because Scripture makes an absolute Proposition, the Lord's Covenant; *This is my Covenant, I will give a new Heart, and I will be their God*: Now Baptism doth seal the Covenant. 2. Because Seals are given for Security, and to confirm Covenanters in the Truth of the Covenant, to assure them; but there is no Need of Assurance in the Truth of a Conditional Proposition, such as this, *If thou believe, thou shalt be saved*; because few question this: Therefore it must be some other Thing, viz. Whether they have Interest in God or not, which the Lord by his Seals assures them of. 3. Because no more Benefit comes to me by this than to a Turk; because if a Turk believe, he shall be saved: Now it's absurd that Baptism doth confer no Privilege to us at all: For, whether baptized or not, 'tis true, if we believe, we shall be saved. 4. Baptism is called the *Laver of Regeneration* it self, and seals Grace it self, as well as Glory hereafter, or upon Condition of Grace. 5. Because, by Baptism, *we are baptized to Christ's Death*, through which Sin is slain and crucified, and by which *we are to reckon our selves dead to Sin*; this we were not to do, if it did seal a conditional Promise.

10. Then see hence, the great Use of Baptism, and the mad Cruelty of the Anabaptists, that denies poor Souls their Right or Seal; little know they what they do.

11. That Baptism doth not give Right; but seals and confirms, and assures of Right given by the Covenant of Grace.

12. That Souls should not labour to make a Right, or get a Right to Christ; but to receive it, see it, believe it, and make use of it. God hath given thee Right, 1 Cor. 1. 31. 'tis thy Part to entertain this Right; believe

believe the Promise, and plead from it, and rejoice in it.

13. That justifying Faith justifies declaratively only, by letting him see what he is in Christ Jesus, and what in Respect of the Gospel, that declares to him Remission of Sins.

14. That the Cause of a Man's Condemnation is not of God, or because they have no Christ, nor Grace, nor Right, nor because they cannot go to Heaven; no: What then? Here's it, they are gifted with Christ, and all Mercies, by a Word in their Hands, Mouths, and Hearts; and this they will not believe: It is not for Want of a Price, but for not buying with the Money; not for Want of Christ, but for not improving of Christ: They have a Well of Consolation; but they will not see this, will not draw out of it: They have Meat, but they will not eat, therefore starve: A Discharge they have, and a Title; but they will not present it, will not lay hold on it, and therefore is Sentence execute against them: Prison Doors are open; but they will not come out, and therefore die there, and become the Devil's for ever: Garments they have, but will not put them on: A Pardon, but will not lay hold on it, cannot believe it.

15. See hence what Faith is; the Believing and particular Application of the Promise of Christ and all spiritual Benefits: And the Seeing, Knowing, and Believing of this, and the cordial Receiving of, and and Entertaining in the Heart, and Using this for our Advantage at all Occasions. 1. It sees this. 2. Assents to this. 3. Believes on Christ for Remission through this. 4. Takes it when offered. 5. Uses it for Pardon, Peace and Joy.

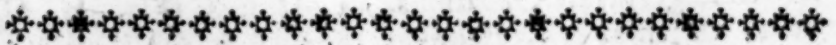
16. See hence, how the Covenant of Grace is free, viz. in that it bestows a Right freely, as is before explained.

17. Learn hence to expound conditional Promises; *Except ye believe, ye shall not be saved*: Not as though Believing were the Condition of the Covenant of Grace; but because eventually we shall never be bene-

sited, unless we morally believe : For though we never get Benefit of our Land, unless we possess, manure and labour it ; yet our Possession is not the Condition on which it is disposed to us. The Covenant of Grace is our Charter, by which we have Right to our Inheritance ; Faith is that, by which we know, see and possess our Rights ; Works coming from, and done in Faith, is that whereby we manure, and labour, and fit our selves and Portion for us.

18. This is marvellous Consolation to poor Souls, that know not what to do, that doubts of their Interest in Christ, or say, I have nothing ado with him, he is not mine, how shall I get him ? Oh here he is at thy Hand, Jesus Christ, with all his Benefits, in thy Heart and Mouth ; *So that thou need not go to Heaven, or Hell for him* ; and not only so, but Jesus Christ made thine, and come unto thy Soul. 1. Cor. 1. 31. Oh, therefore, *receive not this Grace in vain, despise not thine own Mercy* : Thou need not put out thy Hand, he is come to thee ; thou needs not enquire, how shall I get him made mine ? God hath done that to thy Hand ; only welcome him ; say content to the Bargain ; give thy Lord the Keys of all that is in thine House ; labour to see this, use him well, pleasure him ; by this Title plead with God, rejoice in it, trust in it, glory in it : When thou sees and understands this Mystery, Heaven is begun in thy Soul.

19. Here see how Faith makes God All ; how *Unbelief makes God a Liar*, by denying this Title, saying, It cannot be, God hath given Christ to me.



Meditation on Faith.

I shall briefly consider these Things. 1. The Necessity of Faith. 2. Why God did command Faith. 3. The Advantages of it.

For the *first* then. 1. God hath chosen Faith to be the

the Channel of all Good; because it debases Man most, and brings him off himself to God. 2. It honours the Lord most, his Love, Power and Good will and Word; who so believes, glorifies God: Faith ay speaks Good of God. 3. Faith is necessary in respect of its Application by Law; as ye know, if a Malefactor or Murderer, that is called to answer the Judge, be condemned; if he have the King's Pardon, he is to propone it, else he perishes: So Faith is the good Advocate, that propones the Act of Pardon, when conven'd and called to answer for Sin; it is not the Pardon that will do the Turn, but as it is proponed and pleaded, and laid Hold on, in respect of Life, or in respect of its Influence on Sanctification and spiritual Life. Faith is the most fit, 1 Pet. 1. 3. *Whereby we are made Partakers the Divine Nature*: For as Fire will not burn, and Meat will not feed, unless it be applied and eaten; even so, no more will Promises comfort, strengthen and satisfy, unless by Faith made Use of and applied; then the Meat feeds them; Jesus Christ eaten, doth feed; and the Soul lives by him, who is *the Bread that came down from Heaven*.

2dly, Why doth the Lord command us to believe? (1.) To shew his Earnestness that we should believe; then he uses Authority. (2.) To put us out of Doubt, that we may lay hold on Christ: If Christ were only offered, and we desired, there might be some Ground of Doubting; but now the Lord commanding it, there is no Colour left, so as now the Soul hath no Excuse, when it cannot but think it just to obey God. (3.) To make the Wicked inexcusable. (4.) God, by Commands, gives and conveys a Power: And therefore uses this as the Vehicle * thereof; *Stretch forth thine Hand*. (5.) To load the Soul under the Evil of Unbelief, Why? because it is not only Foolishness, but Madness.

3dly, What is the Advantage of Faith? What more hath the Soul than it had before, seeing, as I said, the Covenant of Grace gives a Right? What avails Faith? *Ans.* Much

* That is the Mean of Conveyance.

Much every Way. (1.) Hereby thou glorifies God exceedingly; *He that believeth, glorifieth God.* (2.) Hereby thou pleases him most: *This is the Work of God, that ye believe.* (3.) Thou shalt be hereby personally justified, which before thou wast not. (4.) The Promises are then secure to thee: These Promises, which before declared but thy Title, shall now declare what God will do; now thou shalt be out of all Hazard. (5.) Thou shalt hereby be strengthened to do Duty; it is Meat received and eaten that strengthens, not Meat in the House. (6.) By this thy Spirit shall be kept in Peace and Joy, which before it could not be, as doubting of the Event. *In whom believing, ye rejoice with Joy unspeakable,* 1 Pet. 1. 8. (7.) Thou shalt be an Encourager of others, when they see thee walking cheerfully. (8.) This will keep thee with God: Thou shalt call upon me, and shalt not depart from me.



MEDITATION III.

On the Gospel-privilege of JUSTIFICATION.

MANY intricate Questions are moved concerning the Article of Justification, and great Confusions have thereby arisen; and there is scarce any Thing, in which we should be more clear, than in this Point.

I will only speak to these. 1. How Faith doth justify. 2. When is a Sinner justified. 3. How God may be said to justify. 4. How God pardons Sins in the Converted. 5. Whether in Justification, all Sins, past, present,

present, and to come, are pardoned. 6. How Repentance and Works concur to Justification.

For clearing of all these Questions, which are very useful, I think it fit to distinguish a fourfold Justification; the confounding of which, I look upon as the main Reason of all the Mistakes in this Article.

1st, There is a legal, fundamental and real Justification, whereby Sinners in Jesus Christ are absolved from their Sins, in Jesus Christ transacting from Eternity, and coming in Place of the lost World, and gave his Hand and Promise to satisfy Justice; whence he is called, *The Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World, in whom they are blessed with all Blessings*, and which was in Time exhibited, promised, and declared, and freely given to all that heard him; and, according to which Condescendence, the Son of God did by his Death take away the Sins of the World, bearing them in his own Body: This was the Pardon purchased.

2^{dly}, There is a personal Justification, which by the Soul's Union with Christ, it hath: For, *Christ being justified in the Spirit* in Behalf of his Being, and they by Faith closing with him, they in him are actually justified; and laying hold on the Promise, are thereby personally justified; as a Man that hath his Pardon in his Hand, can hold out against the Law: And the Justification is nothing but the first Pardon applied; and because it's by Faith this is applied, hence we are said to be *justified by Faith*.

3^{dly}, There is a declarative, intimate Pardon; which these that are converted have, after they have sinned, and for which Saints pray daily; and which *Nathan* said to *David*, *God hath likewise taken away thy Sin*, which is the Punishment God as a Father inflicts, not as a Judge; and of which *James*, if I mistake not, speaks, when he saith, *Faith alone doth not justify*.

4^{thly}, There is a final, compleat, open, publick and declarative Justification, which will be at the last Day; all these four Sorts of Justifications are evidently set down in Scripture. Hence, 1. Faith, in respect of our legal

legal fundamental Righteousness and Justification, doth justify declaratively, by seeing our selves justified in Christ: Things are frequently said in Scripture to be, when they appear to be. *By his Knowledge, shall my righteous Servant justify many.* Tho' the Sun doth shine, yet it doth not shine nor give Light to me, till it open mine Eyes. 2. Faith doth justify instrumentally, in respect of personal and forensical Justification, being a passive Mean, whereby the Soul doth passively receive this Sentence, as a Man's Ear doth hear the Judge's Sentence of Absolution. 3. Faith doth justify conditionally, in respect of the second Justification, taking a Condition largely for any Thing antecedent or prerequisite; but is no moral Condition at all: For the Covenant of Grace hath none of these; tho' I shall never get the Money, unless I take it, yet my taking is no Condition moral, properly. 4. Faith, in respect of the second Justification, as also of the third, may be said to justify actively, instrumentally, tho' not immediately: For, as a good Advocate, proponing a good Defence, gets his Client assoilzied, and the Advocate is an Instrument active; even so, the poor Sinner conveyed in the Court of Conscience, to answer Law-demands, and by Faith seeing and perceiving the Gospel promise and Offer of it, doth, by laying hold on this, propone it; from which comes a forensical, personal Justification, by which the Man is justified in his Conscience, and all Execution doth really, tho' possibly not apparently, always cease. 5. Faith doth concur the same Way to the third Justification. As to the last Justification in Heaven, Faith and Works concur *in genere causa largiter, objective*, or objectively, not morally, and do evidence as the Object that they have believed in Christ, to which actual Salvation was promised.

For the second, When is a Sinner justified? *Ans.*
 1. Virtually and really from Eternity, when Jesus Christ engaged in the Work of Redemption from Eternity for them, not then in actual Being physical; but in a moral Being in Christ, who really and legally undertook
 for

for them, considered in God's objective Knowledge as Sinners: And tho' many with Quirks of Wit deny this; as, How can a real Act pass upon a Non-existent Subject? True indeed, a real, physical Act could not pass upon them, but a moral Act might pass upon them; and tho' in their physical Beings they were not from Eternity, yet in their legal Beings they were in Christ, who from Eternity undertook for them, and therefore from Eternity in him had Promises given, 1 *Tim.* 1. 9. This is Scripture-language, let Men say of it what they will; and *Levi* is said to offer up *Tithes* in Abraham, when *Levi* was not existent; and no other Difficulty presses this, but what presses the Decrees of God. 2. I judge this Grace given in Christ Jesus, was publickly given, in respect of God, to all; when he promised, That *the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's Head.* 3. I do judge, that Men are legally Partakers of this, when they are baptized. 4. This is actually declared in the Gospel to all that hear it. 5. Personal justification is when they believe; as when a Friend of mine engages for me to my Creditor, for a Sum, to be paid at such a Time; upon which there is promised to my Friend, in my Behalf, a Discharge, and not to seek them any more; this is proclaimed to all my Children, they hear it, the Sum is paid; when I take my Discharge, and propone it in Court, I am sententially absolved and discharged of the Debt: So, when the Lord took Christ from Eternity, we, tho' not born, were free; as many as hear it, have their Remission declared to them; by Baptism they are infest in their Privilege; by Faith they see this, and laying hold on the Pardon, they are free personally.

Quest. 3. How God may be said to justify? *Ans.* 1. In respect he made the Bargain of the Covenant of Redemption, by which we are justified primarily and fundamentally; he was the Author of this. 2. In respect he gives Faith, and draws the Soul to Christ, in Union, with whom it is justified; it's he that draws and puts the Soul to do that whereby it becomes justified;

fiſed; as when I draw on a Marriage betwixt a poor Woman and a rich Man, tho' it be the Man that immediately enriches the Woman, yet I may be ſaid as a mediate Inſtrument to enrich her. 3. In reſpect the Father doth intimate, declare and publiſh this Pardon. 4. In reſpect he actually keeps from Punishment. 5. By his Conditional Promise, ſhewing *whoever ſhall believe ſhall be ſaved*; hence, they believing, are juſtified, not by any Change in God, but in them; they now coming under the Drop of Mercy, that was dropping upon all under it, ere in ſuch a Station and Place. 6. The Lord juſtifies, in reſpect that forenſically he manifeſts his reconciled Countenance to them in Jeſus Chriſt, by which being juſtified, they have Peace with God.

Queſt. 4. How God pardons Sins in the Juſtified? This is a needful Queſtion; For many indeed pardoned and gracious Perſons, not knowing how the Lord pardons, but imagining ſome other Way of it than Scripture ſets down, not finding it that Way, hence go and walk in the Bitterneſs of their Soul all the Days of their Life: Therefore I would ſay, *Fiſt*, It is not likely that the Lord doth put forth a new Sentence of Law in their Favours who have ſinned and repented, which before was not; but I think it mainly by Intimation: And therefore, would ye know the Lord's Path? I ſhall diſcover my Thoughts of it, what I know by Experience. (1.) Then the Lord intimates this Pardon, by clearing the Covenant of Grace, in which, through Jeſus his Blood, all Sins are pardoned: God in Chriſt pardons all Sins, virtually, tho' it were granted not formally; when the Soul ſees this, then as to it ſelf it is juſtified: Sin is like a Blot on the Covenant of Grace, and the Words of Remiſſion cannot be read; the Lord then, when well pleaſed, opens the Eyes, and takes away the Blot and Confuſion; and ſo, by this Means, intimates it to them, and ſo lets them come to the Knowledge thereof. (2.) In the conditional Covenant, by diſcovering the Condition of Pardon to them, I mean the physical Condition,

not

not of the first fundamental Pardon, but of the third Sort of Pardon; as this, when a Sinner repents and turns, he shall have his Sins forgiven: The Lord, by clearing the Soul to have wrought the Condition, doth hereupon clear the Pardon, which the Soul from this Sign doth rationally gather a Pardon, tho' it see it not; as when a Man sees Smoke, he gathers there is a Fire: These, in respect of divine Ordination, are joined together; viz. Repentance and Pardon. (3.) By giving Access to the Throne of Grace; the unpardoned Sinner gets not a Word to speak, and God saith, *Peace, Speak not to me ament this, there is no Access at all, this speaks Indignation, Out of my Presence*; but when the Heart gets Language and Liberty to speak, this saith, The Door is open, be of good Cheer, he calleth thee; this saith, God would be Friends again, that his Heart is towards his poor Child, and would fain take up Quarrels, when the Spirit is sent to dote the poor Man's Supplication. *David's Heart was towards Absalom*, and therefore was content that the poor Man should come to him; and God would only now save his Credit, and therefore useth Means to bring the Soul to confess his Sins; *Thou wilt prepare their Hearts, and cause thine Ear to hear*: There may come Frowns after this, *but know, would the Lord accept a Sacrifice, if he were angry?* How did he accept? *The Angel did wonderfully*; so the Spirit works wonderfully in Prayer: Was he not reconciled then? (4.) By looking more graciously upon the Soul, and with a more pleasant Countenance: When *Esau* was reconciled to *Jacob*, *Jacob* said, *I see in my Lord's Countenance, as it were the Face of an Angel of God*: Glooms and Clouds are now away, *Hence lift up the Light of thy Countenance on me*. When God is angry, there are Frowns in God's Countenance; and tho' the blind World cannot see this, yet the Elect and converted Ones see it in their Measure; Men will know Folks Hearts by their Countenance. Doth the Lord look so to thee? Know it, the Grudge is gone. (5.) By the Effects, the Heart is made more holy, and

drawn nearer to God, and Strength and Assistance given to Duty; all he doth, prospers, and God accepteth the Work of his Hand. When the Lord is angry, every Thing goes wrong, *Judg. 3. The Hand of the Lord was against them every where*: So now, when the Lord is well pleased, he is with them. Hence, *Jer. 32. I will make them walk in my Way, and bring them home. Why? For I have pardoned their Iniquity.* (6.) By beating in a particular seasonable Promise into the Soul, suitable to the Condition of the poor Creature, with which the Heart is made to close, and with which it is made to grip; and which is strongly and clearly born in upon the Soul, such as this, *Fear not, for God hath taken away thine Iniquity*, and this after deep Down-casting; with which there is a Compliance of the Heart, and by which it is made more holy, and to which it sticks, as a *Saying of Acceptation*. Now, if ye do imagine, that ye must hear a vocal Voice, or a particular Promise sensibly beat in upon you evermore when the Lord pardons, ye are deceived; but if ye be helped to lay hold on Christ, *thro' whom Remission of Sins is preached*, or helped to repent, and withal to see the Lord looking more favourably to thee, which, if thou be spiritual, thy spiritual Eye will discern; then may'st thou know thy Sins are pardoned, tho' thereafter a Cloud comes. If, after Trial, no Sins but of Infirmary; Then it is a Trial to see if thou wilt doubt the Lord's Constancy.

Quest. 5. Whether all Sins past, present and to come, are pardoned in Justification? I answer, 1. Virtually, fundamentally and legally they are; because Christ, who was made Sin, was condemned and dead to Sin: And look as in Adam all are said to have sinned; So in the second Adam, all are made alive and Righteous. 2. In respect of intimate Pardon, all Sins are not forgiven, till they be confessed, mourned for, and resolved to be forsaken; and till Application of Christ by Faith be made, fatherly Anger is not done away.

Further

Further Observations on Justifying Faith.

1st, Justifying Faith is the Answer or Echo unto the Call of God in the Gospel: Like that; *When thou said, Seek ye my Face*, here is the Call; *My Heart answered, Thy Face, Lord, will I seek*; here is the Echo or Answer of the Heart. As the Gospel declares Christ in the Call; so Faith receives him.

2dly, There are two Things in the Gospel, holding forth Christ therein. There is, (1.) The Truth and Verity of what is declared: Hence called a *Faithful Saying*, 1 Tim. 1. 15. (2.) There is the Goodness of what is declared: Hence it is worthy of all Acceptation. As the Gospel is true, the Understanding sees and is perswaded of the Gospel, as the Patriarchs, Heb. 11. 13. As the Gospel is good Tidings, the Will closes with, and embraces this Good: So that Faith is the Understanding and Will closing with the Truth and Goodness of the Promise, and with Christ in both Respects, who is holden forth to Faith in the Promises: So then, Faith is a glad, hearty, willing Believing of the glad Tidings of a Saviour come to save them from all their Evils.

3dly, The Grounds of Faith are, the Command of God, and Offer of the Gospel; these are extrinsical, making Faith to be Duty: But the intrinsical, primary and chief Ground of Faith, is the Gospel-declaration, holding forth Christ, in his Person, Natures, and Offices, and what he is to the poor Sinner who is called to believe, Matth. 11. 27, 28. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20, 21. *Be reconciled*; here is the Command: But this Command is founded on the Gospel-declaration, which is, *For he hath made him to be Sin for us*.

4thly, Christ Jesus is never revealed in the Gospel effectually to save Sinners, until in some Measure the Soul be made to feel its own Emptiness and Want of Self-righteousness, Luke 1. 53. John 9. 39. Matth. 11. 28.

5thly,

5thly, Legal Terrors and Horrors are not always attending true Conviction and Humiliation for Sin; or, Souls may be humbled and fitted for Christ, though they never sensibly found these legal Horrors: Legal Convictions, I grant, are necessary, yea the greatest and deepest Humiliation is accompanied with Conviction and Complaints of Heart-hardness, *Psal.* 80. 18. *Isa.* 63. 17. *Fer.* 31. 19. and therefore are Sinners, under the Sense of a dead, blind, hard Heart, to believe: For true Humiliation doth not consist in Terrors, Horrors, Despair and Fears of Hell, or intense Sorrow; for then the Damned in Hell should be most humbled: But, he is most humbled, who sees most of his own Heart-Plagues, and abhors himself for it, trusts least to his own Righteousness, sees most of his own Inability to save himself, and is most willing to be saved by Grace, or in any Manner or Way the Lord shall think fit.

6thly, As all are not humbled in the same Manner, or prepared for Christ in the same Manner; so neither do all close with Christ in the same Manner. To some Heaven opens, as it were, and Christ Jesus the Lord is transfigured before them; and the Glory of the new Covenant and Power issued out is so great, that with full Sails the poor Creature enters into the Harbour of Rest; and cries out with Enlargement, *My Lord, and my God! Whom have I but thee? Lord Jesus, I come,* I cannot resist: And here is distinct particular Application, and full Assurance, with extraordinary Enlargement; and Unbelief and other Corruptions are so dead-stricken, that they appear not: Here is that higher Way. But others enter into the Haven of Rest, and close truly with Jesus Christ; but it's like a Ship entring into the Harbour against Wind and Stream, by hard Rowing and Drawing of Cables and Ropes; and here is little or no Sense, great Fears, the Opposition of an unbelieving dead carnal Heart, that cannot prize, love or esteem Christ; and the poor Soul doth indeed believe, but dares not say it doth believe;

lieve ; it hath a direct Act of Faith, but no reflex Act. Sometimes when there is little Light in the Grounds of Faith, Sense of Need, and Fear of Wrath, with some Impressions of the Command of God, makes the Soul wilful, or wilfully resolve to believe and trust on Christ, with this, *If I perish, I perish*. As *Job, Thou wilt kill me, yet will I trust in him*, *Job* 13. 9. Some, under the Sense of a dead, blind, empty Heart, come to Christ for Life, *Prov.* 9. 9. *Hos.* 14. 1. *Rev.* 3. 18. *Jer.* 31. 18, 19. Some are pursued with Terrors, and therefore flee into Christ, as into a *City of Refuge from the Avenger of Blood*, and as unto a Saviour, to save them from the Wrath to come.

7thly, But the most ordinary Expressions of Faith, is by the Heart's Consent to be married with Christ, coming to him, receiving of him, and calling upon his Name: For, 1. Sometimes the Soul closes with Christ by Way of Marriage-consent and Contract; Christ as a Suiter in the Gospel comes and courts the Soul, importunes, suits and seeks the Heart, waits, presses a Giving-up with all other Lovers, a Taking and Receiving of him for their Husband, that is for all Things: And the Soul, in Answer to this, goes out after Christ in Acts of Love, conquering them, and causing them to say, *Behold we come unto thee*, *Jer.* 3. 23. and here the Soul looks on Christ as an Husband, *Hos.* 2. 6. But, 2. Here are Desires after Christ, *Rom.* 10. 12. *Whosoever calleth upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved*; So, *Luke* 18. *The Prayer of the Publican* justifies him: The poor Soul not knowing what to do, it casts an hungry hunting Look after Christ; and it says, It may be he will be gracious: Fain would it believe, but it cannot; therefore in Anguish of Heart it cries out, as *Ephraim*, *Lord turn, draw me, help my Unbelief*; Lord, according to the Riches of thy Grace, save me. 3. There is a Coming to Christ, that is, when the Soul, out of a Sense of Sin and Misery, doth make Application to Christ for Help, as only able to help: They who truly do this, believe truly; such look to Christ, and wait on him for Help. 4. There

It is a more close Act of Faith, and that is Receiving : For it is one Thing to come to a Table, and another Thing to put forth the Hand to take and eat. This Receiving Act of Faith, is the particular Application of Christ, with full Consent of Heart, to the Soul : Thus we take or receive Christ, when we take or receive the Promise as spoken to us : And the Lord not only presses a coming Act, but the more close Act of receiving of Christ.

8thly, In all closing with Christ, there is Love, *Rom. 10. 12.* Faith is distinct from Love ; nor is it as we love Christ, or because we love him, that we are justified.

9thly, True Faith doth not come to Christ for the present Distress, as we do to Physicians and Lawiers, whose Help we need, and when done with them, we dispatch them, and leave them ; but we come to Christ for himself, to marry him, and therefore abides and continues with him for ever, *Jer. 50. 5.* To come to Christ, but not for ever, is to visit him, not to marry him.

10thly, It is of Faith, that it may be of Grace, saith the Apostle, *Rom. 4. 16.* The Lord hath so employed Faith in the Covenant of Grace, giving it such a Place therein, in Regard that Faith doth exclude Boasting, and holds forth the Riches of Grace most evidently : For Faith goes out of itself, as out of a most miserable indigent Creature, in whom there is no Help, and makes Application to the Lord Jesus, from whose Fullness and Grace, which Faith doth acknowledge, it looks to be supplied. In Love, Patience, godly Fear, &c. we give something to God ; but Faith comes empty, gives nothing ; for it is a receiving Grace, not a giving Grace, it hath Beggary stampt upon it.

11thly, Particular Application of the Promises to our selves, is so much of the Essence of Faith, as it is inseparable from it. Justifying Faith believes not a Saviour in general ; but looks on Christ as the Soul's Saviour, and that either implicitly, if not explicitly : For, as the Promise holds out Christ,

so Faith receives him ; but the Promise holds him forth particularly to the Soul, *Behold your God, Isa. 40. v. 9.* Faith therefore, as such, must apprehend Christ.

12thly, There is some Measure of Assurance in all true and saving Faith ; and the denying of this, or separating particular Application from the Nature of Faith, or to say there may be a Faith where Assurance is wanting, hath a bitter Root of Apostasy from God, and keeps Persons at a Distance from Christ ; and the very Fountain of all Unsettledness, Tossings, and tormenting Fears, and Doubtings of the Soul ; and hath Influence to keep Souls in perpetual Bondage and Desperation.

13thly, In Order of Nature, we first believe Christ to be ours, ere we trust on him ; and must believe the Promises to belong to us, before we receive them, apply and draw Comfort from them.

14thly, There may be real Closing with Christ, under much felt Deadness and Coldness, *John 5. 40. John 11. 25.*

15thly, To take of the Waters of Life freely, is no Presumption in any, be they Elect or Reprobate : Did Hypocrites truly believe and close with the Promises, as the Elect do, they should not presume ; but they presume, because they believe not in a right Manner : To believe Mercy and Peace, because of their own Worth, this is Presumption ; to believe the Attaining the End, without using the Means, this is Presumption ; to think to come to Heaven, to have Peace, though we walk in the Imagination of our own Hearts, this is Presumption : But to look for all Mercy meere-ly upon the Account of Christ, is no Presumption in any, be who they will.

16thly, Faith is a Christian's daily Work, his Life ; he lives as he believes. We must not sit down on our first Closing with Christ ; but we must daily, in all our Wants, Temptations and Infirmities, look up to Christ, as at the Beginning, *Isa. 55. 3. Hab. 2. 4.*

17thly,

17thly, One Main Reason of the Want of Sanctification, is the Want of Faith, 1 Pet. 1. 4. Mark 9. 19, 23.

18thly, God doth not draw to himself in that Way and Method we think, and sinfully too often propose to him: I was thinking and looking, that the Lord would first come with the Law, and humble me to Hell; and then that Christ should be discovered to me with great Glory; but behold he came in a Road that I did expect him, 2 Kings 5. 11. Prov. 3. 5. Isa. 55. 8.

19thly, Faith is the first Grace in Exercise, prior in Time to any other Grace, John. 6. 28. Jer. 31. 20. *After I was turned, I smote upon my Thigh. Let every one fix here first, ere he do any other Thing: For whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin.*

20thly, Faith, and every other Grace, will be dying, and pining, and withering, that Place may be for Dependence on Christ; and that Christ, for a renewed Life, may put a renewed Obligation on the Soul, Isa. 33. 24. Psal. 102. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 24.

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Some Observations on Effectual Calling.

1. **T**HAT all God's Elect are called effectually of God in Time, or that there is such a Thing as the Voice of the Lord in his Word, calling the Soul particularly, and earnestly to embrace the Offer of Christ and all his Benefits; or otherwise no Man could come to Christ, being dead, unless quickned by this Call: It were Presumption to come without this, nor would any poor Creature come without it, Rom. 8. 30. 1 Cor. 1. 2. Jer. 3. 22.

2. The immediate End of this Call is to receive, or believe on, or come to Christ for all Things. The Lord at first and primarily doth press nothing but Believing and Receiving of all Things freely, John 6. 28. Isa. 55. 1. Nothing is required, but to eat and
drink,

Drink. Mat. 11. 28, the Lord only requires that they come at first: It is true, when they are come, and gotten Rest to their Souls, He then calls them to take on his Yoke: For tho' the Saints be called to Heaven, to Holiness, *to take on his Yoke*; yet not at first or immediately, but after they have believed and are justified.

3. This Call is the very Voice of God to a Sinner, and hath the Evidence of a Divine Power, Wisdom and Goodness: So that the poor Soul, who is called, doth see, that it is the Lord with whom it hath now to do; this is it which doth make the Soul regard, and without this we should never believe; 1 Pet. 2. 9.

4. This Call of God *to come to the Lord Jesus*, is no other than the Voice of God in his Word, commanding us to believe, inviting us to receive of the Waters of Life freely: It is not then any immediate Call, without the Word of the Scriptures of God in the Heart, No: But the very Promulgation of the Gospel, is the Call of God, which doth lay Obligation on us to believe. Let us not say then, What Warrant have we to believe? We fear we shall presume: For if ye have ever heard or read of God beseeching you to believe, saying, *Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the Waters of Life freely*; you have a Warrant to believe, and your Endeavour to comply with this cannot be Presumption. I grant, unless the Spirit inwardly apply to the Heart the external Call, ye cannot believe; but yet, whether the Spirit do it or not, ye ought to believe: *It is the Word that is near us, in our Hearts, and in our Mouths*, Rom. 10. 6, 7. *We need not then go up to Heaven, or descend to Hell for Faith.* Faith is a hearty Closing with God's Word in the Gospel, or a hearty Believing the glad Tidings of the Gospel.

This Call of God is inwardly applied to the Heart, by the Spirit of God; the Spirit of God takes the external Word, and goes to the Heart of a Sinner with it, and there calls for Attention, holds forth the Riches of the Gospel, saith to the poor Soul, *To thee is this Word come*, convinces the Soul of the Sinfulness of its Unbelief, shows, that it's the Lord's Command and

Will that it should believe, gives Motives thereunto, takes Pains in answering all the Soul's Objections, holds the Soul close to it, never leaves it, until the Soul hath consented: For tho' the Word externally heard or read, doth indeed lay an Obligation upon all to believe; yet, unless the Spirit deal with the Heart, and solícite the Business, the Soul will never come to Christ. *Hos. 2. 14. Jer. 31. 32. 2 Cor. 3. 3.* There is therefore an inward Call, God speaks to and in the Heart.

6. This Call is particular, God singles out a poor Soul from the rest, and saith, It's to thee I now speak, and none else; it's thee I am seeking to believe; give me thy Consent, whatever others do: It's not now a general Word, all are bound to believe; but the Lord applies this General particularity to the Soul, there is none concerned in this Transaction, but God and the Soul: *He calleth his Sheep by Name, John 10. 3. 2 Tim. 2. 19.*

7. Altho' the internal Call be not always sensibly found: Yet the external Call doth always continue, it is constant; there is not such a sensible Stirring of the Spirit of God upon the Heart inciting it to believe, after it hath fully closed with Christ, as there was before: Yet, in respect of the external Word, the Spirit of God no less truly calls to believe, and obliges to come to Christ, as at the first: *Indeed the Spirit of God doth not always strive within a Man, Gen. 6. 2.* and so the Inward Call may not always be heard, yea, the Spirit may leave the Soul: Yet the external Call continues; and so it is Duty always to believe: And if ye come, ye shall be welcome, be it at any Time of thy Life: Therefore do not say, My Time is past; stretch not this Truth too far; for your Time is never past in Regard of God's Word, which is to be our Rule; and therefore it is said, *That all the Day long he stretched out his Hands, Rom. 10. 31.*

8. All within the visible Church are externally called, *Mat. 22. 5, 6.* There is never one who hears the Gospel, but is called to believe; so as he is bound thereto

as his Duty, and sins if he doth not believe, *John 6. 28.* Whatever makes it his Duty to pray, to fear and love God, and that is God's Will revealed in his Word, the same Word makes it Duty to believe; so as they are punished for not believing.

9. A great many are externally called and truly obliged to believe, who are yet notwithstanding never internally called. The Word and Sound of the Gospel reaches all within the visible Church; but the Spirit doth not deal and strive with the Hearts of many Men.

10. This Call, as to many Hypocrites and Reprobates, is likewise internal, as well as external; God deals, tho' not effectually, yet really with the Hearts of a great many, with whom he never prevails; hence his Spirit is said to *strive within them, Gen. 6. 2.* And *Some believe with Joy, and are said to be Partakers of the Holy Ghost.*

11. The Call of God is a powerful efficacious Call in the Hearts of all his Elect. *They are compelled to come in, drawn into Christ, so that they run. They shall be willing in the Day of Christ's Power.* The Evidence is so clear and convincing, that they cannot but assent; and the Good so great, they cannot but will, cannot but love it, and be drawn thereto. *Them I must bring in, saith Christ, John 10.* it's called a new Creation, and Creation is an irresistible Act of Power. *I create the Fruit of the Lips, Peace, Peace to him that is afar off.* And as the Dead, when awakened by the Sound of the last Trumpet, and the Voice of the Archangel, cannot but rise; so no more can the Soul dead in Sin but answer this powerful Call of Christ.

12. Yet do not the Elect always at first answer this Call; but stand out for want of sufficient Evidence and Power of Light: When the Hour of Power, the Word of Power doth indeed come, *then they come, Jer. 3. 22.*

13. The Call of God is not the naked Command or Invitation to believe on Christ: But I suppose four Things will be found in it.

(1.) An

(1.) An Exhibition and Declaration of Christ, as the Saviour of lost distressed Sinners, *made Sin for us, that we might be made the Righteousness of God.* A Revelation of sufficient and suitable Help in Christ Jesus for the poor Sinner particularly: This is it which Faith first closeth with, which Faith sees and beholds with great Pleasure.

(2.) There is the Gospel-Command, inviting and calling them to believe heartily and joyfully what the Gospel saith; which is the same with Receiving it, to apply to themselves this general Word.

(3.) A Promise of Justification and Salvation, in case of Believing.

(4.) An Answer of Objections which the Soul makes. In these Four doth the Call of God consist, in which are comprehended, the several Motives the Spirit of God uses for inclining the Heart to Christ.

14. This Call is an earnest, importunate, most loving and gracious Call. Love is the great Cord which draws the Sinner effectually to Christ, it's the Key which opens the Heart of a Sinner; *I have drawn thee with the Bands of a Man, with Loving-kindness have I drawn thee.*

Christ, when he draws or calls a poor Sinner, appears in a very lovely Posture: Oh, thinks the Soul, and doth the Lord of Glory now seek after me? Is he willing to pass over my Sins? and so unwilling that I should perish? Doth he seek my Heart, and nothing else? doth he so earnestly desire it, as nothing else can please him without this? Hath he suffered so many Denials, and yet will take none, but still continues, and will not leave me? Do I see him with all his bloody Wounds, and hear him by all these Sufferings he endured for me, obtest me, not to grieve him any longer with my Unkindness, nor destroy my self with Unbelief, but lean my self in his Bosom? And shall I, can I resist him? Oh no, I find no Power in me to resist this Love.

Differen-

Differences between Moral and Saving Grace.

I find that special Grace, and common moral Grace do much differ. When any Person is truly converted, I find that he is another Man than what he was, not only when prophane, or ignorant, or morally civil; but when most moral, under a common Work of the Spirit. I find an eightfold Difference.

1st, When I was a meer moral Man, I sought something from Christ, and rested on this, had no Fellowship with Christ himself: But since *the Lord visited me with the Love of his Chosen*, I seek the Lord himself, I am never satisfied without him, and find Fellowship with himself. *The Virgins love thee.* Song. L. 5.

2dly, When I was a moral Man, I drew my Comfort from my Duties; but now I draw my Duties from my Comforts: My Work was first, and because I did such a Thing, or expected to get such a Reward for working, I therefore went about Duties; but now I first close with the Promise, and because alive, *I yield my Members as Weapons of Righteousness*. While a moral Man, I did, and then believed: But now, I first believe, and then do. My Obedience is ingraft upon the Promises freely given. *Work out your Salvation; for it is God that worketh in you to will, and to do,* Phil. 2. 13. But before, I could never see a Promise, until I saw my Work; the Promises were ingrafted upon my Works and Duties, my Duties did bear my Privileges; now, my Privileges bear my Duties.

3dly, Whatever I did, was for my self; when indeed converted, I acted purely for the Lord, and to please him: When moral, I hated then Sin as prejudicial to me; but now, as separating from, and grievous to Christ.

4thly, What I did, was from my self, and in my own Strength, not seeing a Need of a Divine Power to lean upon;

upon ; but when under special Grace, I live a Life of Faith, I see my own Strength in another, and wait upon him. *I can do all Things through Christ that strengthneth me. And when I am weak, then am I strong,* 2 Cor. 12. 12.

6thly, I had never full Satisfaction to my Conscience for the Guilt of Sin; Satisfaction with a spiritual Good ; And therefore, were there Fears, and Out-cryings, *Who will shew us any Good ?* But the Blood of Christ gives full Satisfaction and Rest to both Heart and Conscience; so as a Man, that hath Christ, may say, I seek no more.

6thly, Common Grace, manifesting it self in Joys, Fears, Diligence, Zeal, &c. is mostly seated in the Imagination and Fancy : And therefore, as it quickly comes, and mightily affects, so it is as easily and quickly gone : But Evangelical Grace is seated in the Understanding and Will ; having once got there, it is not easily eradicated again.

7thly, Moral Grace, much of it is acquired ; but special Grace is infused.

8thly, Moral Grace puffs up, but special Grace humbles.

F I N I S.

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ERRATA.

Pag. 10. l. 11. f. their r. your. ibid. l. 12. f. you r. you. Pag. 30. l. 29. f. Declararion r. Declaration. Pag. 33. l. 8. f. said r. faith. Ibid. l. 31. f. to had r. had to.



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